

OFFICIAL CODE OF GEORGIA ANNOTATED

With Provision for Subsequent Pocket Parts

Prepared by

The Code Revision Commission
The Office of Legislative Counsel
and
The Editorial Staff of LexisNexis®



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Volume 21 **2023 Edition**

Title 25. Fire Protection and Safety

Title 26. Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics

Including Acts of the 2023 Session of the General Assembly of Georgia
and Annotations taken from the Georgia Reports
and the Georgia Appeals Reports

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

*I, Brad Raffensperger, Secretary of State of the State
of Georgia, do hereby certify that*

the statutory portion of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated contained in
this volume is a true and correct copy of such material as enacted by the
General Assembly of Georgia; all as the same appear on file and record in
this office.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and
affixed the seal of my office, at the Capitol, in the City
of Atlanta, this 1st day of July, in the year of our
Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-three and of the
Independence of the United States of America the
Two Hundred and Forty-Seventh.

Brad Raffensperger
Brad Raffensperger, Secretary of State

Preface

This volume cumulates and replaces the 2014 edition of Volume 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, as supplemented by the 2022 Cumulative Supplement. The 2014 Volume 21 and its 2022 Supplement may be recycled or, if so desired, retained for historical purposes.

This volume contains all laws specifically codified in Titles 25 and 26 by the General Assembly through the 2023 Session. This volume also contains case annotations reflecting decisions posted to LexisNexis® through May 19, 2023. These annotations will appear in the following traditional reporter sources: Georgia Supreme Court Opinions; Georgia Appeals Court Opinions; Southeastern Reporter, Second Series; Supreme Court Reporter; Federal Reporter, Third Series; Federal Supplement, Second Series; Federal Rules Decisions; and Bankruptcy Reporter. As official and traditional citations become available, substitutions for the LexisNexis® citations will be made.

Additionally, LexisNexis® has prepared annotations and references to Attorney General Opinions, law reviews, and other research sources that we hope will be beneficial as you utilize this product. A complete listing of those sources is as follows: Official and Unofficial Attorney General Opinions; Opinions of the Judicial Qualifications Commission; Advisory Opinions of the State Disciplinary Board of the State Bar; Formal Advisory Opinions of the State Disciplinary Board of the State Bar, issued by the Supreme Court of Georgia; Emory Law Journal; Georgia Law Review; Georgia State University Law Review; John Marshall Law Review; Mercer Law Review; Georgia State Bar Journal; American Law Reports; American Jurisprudence 2d; American Jurisprudence Pleading and Practice; American Jurisprudence Proof of Facts; American Jurisprudence Trials; Corpus Juris Secundum; and Uniform Laws Annotated. Also included, where appropriate, are cross references to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

This volume retains amendment notes and effective date notes for Acts passed during the 2021, 2022, and 2023 Sessions of the General Assembly. In order to determine the changes which were made or the effective date applied to a Code section by an Act passed prior to the 2021 Session of the General Assembly, the user should consult the Georgia Laws.

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User's Guide

In order to assist both the legal profession and the layperson in obtaining the maximum benefit from the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, a User's Guide containing comments and information on the many features found within the Code has been included in Volume 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

Table of Titles

Title	1. General Provisions.
	2. Agriculture.
	3. Alcoholic Beverages.
	4. Animals.
	5. Appeal and Error.
	6. Aviation.
	7. Banking and Finance.
	8. Buildings and Housing.
	9. Civil Practice.
	10. Commerce and Trade.
	11. Commercial Code.
	12. Conservation and Natural Resources.
	13. Contracts.
	14. Corporations, Partnerships, and Associations.
	15. Courts.
	16. Crimes and Offenses.
	17. Criminal Procedure.
	18. Debtor and Creditor.
	19. Domestic Relations.
	20. Education.
	21. Elections.
	22. Eminent Domain.
	23. Equity.
	24. Evidence.
	25. Fire Protection and Safety.
	26. Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics.
	27. Game and Fish.
	28. General Assembly.
	29. Guardian and Ward.

TABLE OF TITLES

30. Handicapped Persons.
31. Health.
32. Highways, Bridges, and Ferries.
33. Insurance.
34. Labor and Industrial Relations.
35. Law Enforcement Officers and Agencies.
36. Local Government.
37. Mental Health.
38. Military, Emergency Management, and Veterans Affairs.
39. Minors.
40. Motor Vehicles and Traffic.
41. Nuisances.
42. Penal Institutions.
43. Professions and Businesses.
44. Property.
45. Public Officers and Employees.
46. Public Utilities and Public Transportation.
47. Retirement and Pensions.
48. Revenue and Taxation.
49. Social Services.
50. State Government.
51. Torts.
52. Waters of the State, Ports, and Watercraft.
53. Wills, Trusts, and Administration of Estates.

In Addition, This Publication Includes

Constitution of the United States

Constitution of the State of Georgia

Tables of Comparative Sections

Table of Acts

Index to Local and Special Laws

TABLE OF TITLES

Index to General Laws of Local Application

General Index

Table of Contents

VOLUME 21

TITLE 25

FIRE PROTECTION AND SAFETY

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. General Provisions, 25-1-1	3
2. Regulation of Fire and Other Hazards to Persons and Property Generally, 25-2-1 through 25-2-41	4
3. Local Fire Departments Generally, 25-3-1 through 25-3-27	62
4. Firefighter Standards and Training, 25-4-1 through 25-4-12	75
5. Resolution of Wages, Hours, Working Conditions of Firefighters, 25-5-1 through 25-5-14	96
6. Mutual Aid Resource Pacts, 25-6-1 through 25-6-11	103
7. Georgia Fire Academy, 25-7-1 through 25-7-8	109
8. Regulation of Blasting Operations Generally, 25-8-1 through 25-8-12	113
9. Blasting or Excavating Near Underground Facilities, 25-9-1 through 25-9-14	124
10. Regulation of Fireworks, 25-10-1 through 25-10-9	155
11. Regulation of Fire Protection Systems, 25-11-1 through 25-11-19	180
12. Regulation of Fire Extinguishers and Suppression Systems, 25-12-1 through 25-12-22	196
13. Municipal, County, and Volunteer Fire Departments Nomenclature, 25-13-1 through 25-13-10	210
14. Georgia Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection, 25-14-1 through 25-14-11	215
15. Other Safety Inspections and Regulations, 25-15-1 through 25-15-110	226

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE 26

FOOD, DRUGS, AND COSMETICS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. General Provisions, 26-1-1	268
2. Standards, Labeling, and Adulteration of Food, 26-2-1 through 26-2-466	269
3. Standards, Labeling, and Adulteration of Drugs and Cos- metics, 26-3-1 through 26-3-24	444
4. Pharmacists and Pharmacies, 26-4-1 through 26-4-214	468
5. Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Programs, 26-5-1 through 26-5-80	603
Index to Titles 25 and 26	633

TITLE 25

FIRE PROTECTION AND SAFETY

Chap.

1. General Provisions, 25-1-1.
2. Regulation of Fire and Other Hazards to Persons and Property Generally, 25-2-1 through 25-2-41.
3. Local Fire Departments Generally, 25-3-1 through 25-3-27.
4. Firefighter Standards and Training, 25-4-1 through 25-4-12.
5. Resolution of Wages, Hours, Working Conditions of Firefighters, 25-5-1 through 25-5-14.
6. Mutual Aid Resource Pacts, 25-6-1 through 25-6-11.
7. Georgia Fire Academy, 25-7-1 through 25-7-8.
8. Regulation of Blasting Operations Generally, 25-8-1 through 25-8-12.
9. Blasting or Excavating Near Underground Facilities, 25-9-1 through 25-9-14.
10. Regulation of Fireworks, 25-10-1 through 25-10-12.
11. Regulation of Fire Protection Systems and Professionals, 25-11-1 through 25-11-19.
12. Regulation of Fire Extinguishers and Suppression Systems, 25-12-1 through 25-12-22.
13. Municipal, County, and Volunteer Fire Departments Nomenclature, 25-13-1 through 25-13-10.
14. Georgia Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection, 25-14-1 through 25-14-11.
15. Other Safety Inspections and Regulations, 25-15-1 through 25-15-110.

Cross references.

Criminal penalties for transmitting false report of fire, transmitting a false public alarm and making restitution, or refusing to obey official request at fire or other emergency, §§ 16-10-27, 16-10-28, 16-10-30.

Farmers' mutual fire insurance companies, § 33-16-1 et seq.

Property insurance generally, § 33-32-1 et seq.

Emergency management, § 38-3-1 et seq.

Liability of officers and agents for acts performed while fighting fires or for acts performed at scenes of emergencies, § 51-1-30.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. Trials.**

Actions on Fire Insurance Policies, 10
Am. Jur. Trials 301.

Preparation and Trial of Arson Case, 19
Am. Jur. Trials 685.

Use of Discovery in Product Related
Burn Injury Cases, 22 Am. Jur. Trials 199.

Television Fire Litigation, 26 Am. Jur.
Trials 463.

Preparing the Portable Kerosene
Heater Case for Trial, 43 Am. Jur. Trials
315.

Handling Fire Claims Out of Court, 57
Am. Jur. Trials 155.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec.

25-1-1.

Penalties for providing dynamite caps to minors.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.

Innkeeper's Failure to Protect Against Fire, 14 POF2d 657.

Failure to Prevent Outbreak and Spread of Fire, 23 POF2d 461.

Point of Origin of Fire — Improperly Installed or Maintained Heating Appliance, 27 POF2d 1.

Improper or Defective Wiring as Cause of Fire, 47 POF2d 451.

Electric Signs — Determining the Cause of Property Damages or Personal Injury, 23 POF3d 159.

25-1-1. Penalties for providing dynamite caps to minors.

(a) Any person, firm, or corporation who sells, gives, or otherwise makes available any dynamite cap or other similar device to a minor shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) In addition to the punishment provided in subsection (a) of this Code section, the license or permit to engage in the business of dealing in or to sell explosives of any person, firm, or corporation convicted of violating subsection (a) of this Code section shall automatically stand revoked and shall be null and void.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 306, §§ 1, 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 12 et seq.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 95 et seq. 53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 85 et seq.

CHAPTER 2

REGULATION OF FIRE AND OTHER HAZARDS TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY GENERALLY

Sec.		Sec.	
25-2-1.	Definition of Commissioner as Safety Fire Commissioner.		structures presenting special hazards with minimum fire safety standards.
25-2-2.	Creation of office of Safety Fire Commissioner.	25-2-14.2.	Authority of state fire marshal to deny permit or request for certificate or to issue stop-work order.
25-2-3.	Duties, responsibilities, and delegation authority of Commissioner.	25-2-15.	Temporary occupancy permits for buildings presenting special hazards.
25-2-4.	Adoption of rules and regulations by Commissioner.	25-2-16.	Regulation of the storage, transportation, and handling of hazardous materials; use of hold-open latches at self-service gasoline stations; plans for bulk storage facilities.
25-2-4.1.	Permit, license, and inspection fees and charges.	25-2-17.	Regulation of explosives; licensure; required reporting.
25-2-5.	Appointment, qualifications, and salary of state fire marshal.	25-2-18.	Exemption of public buildings from fees or licenses; waiver for churches and charities.
25-2-6.	State fire marshal as head of Safety Fire Division.	25-2-19.	Regulation of fire hazards in hotels, apartment houses, department stores, warehouses, and public places.
25-2-7.	Appointment process for deputy state fire marshal and other personnel.	25-2-20.	Licensing of traveling carnivals, circuses, and other exhibits.
25-2-8.	Payment of expenses of employees in state fire marshal's office.	25-2-21.	[Reserved] Investigation on complaint of dangerous building appurtenances; effect of failure to remove or repair after notice.
25-2-9.	Authority of state fire marshal and employees to investigate and arrest.	25-2-22.	Right of Commissioner and other authorized officials to enter and inspect buildings and premises.
25-2-10.	Appeal process and requirement for surety bond.	25-2-22.1.	Inspection warrants.
25-2-11.	[Reserved] Local inspections — Duty of cities and counties generally; assistance of cities and counties by state fire marshal.	25-2-23.	Issuance of notice to correct unsafe conditions.
25-2-12.	State fire safety standards, enforcement, investigations, and variances.	25-2-24.	Filing of petition for court order compelling compliance with notice.
25-2-12.1.	Deputizing of local fire marshals, deputy local fire marshals, and state inspectors as state officers.	25-2-25.	Remedy of unsafe conditions by city or county upon failure to comply with court order.
25-2-13.	Fire safety requirements for buildings or structures presenting special hazards.		
25-2-14.	Review of plans and specifications of buildings or structures presenting special hazards.		
25-2-14.1.	Compliance of buildings and		

Sec.		Sec.	
25-2-26.	Enforcement of Code Sections 25-2-22 through 25-2-25 by court order.	25-2-33.1.	Reports of arson and suspected arson to state fire marshal and insurers; prohibition of payment of insurance claim upon receipt of report prior to notification.
25-2-27.	Suspected arson investigation — Authority to take testimony and arrest; obligation to furnish information to district attorney.	25-2-34.	Cooperation with Commissioner by Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol, and Georgia Bureau of Investigation.
25-2-28.	Suspected arson investigation — Power to subpoena witnesses and documents; administration of oaths; court order to compel compliance.	25-2-35.	Payment of reasonable fees for assistance in assembling evidence and apprehending suspects.
25-2-29.	Hearing procedure.	25-2-36.	Civil remedies for violations of chapter and rules, regulations, or orders of Commissioner.
25-2-30.	Duty of state fire marshal as to promotion of fire prevention and life safety generally.	25-2-37.	Locking exit doors; construction of building without approval of plans; civil penalties for violation of chapter or rules.
25-2-31.	Dissemination of fire prevention information by state fire marshal; fire prevention education in schools.	25-2-38.	Criminal penalties for violations of chapter and rules, regulations, or orders of Commissioner.
25-2-32.	Maintenance of records of fire losses; reports of losses by insurance companies; reports of fires.	25-2-38.1.	Sovereign immunity of state not waived; legal duty of property owner or lessee not relieved.
25-2-32.1.	Reports to Safety Fire Division of serious burn injuries.	25-2-39.	Construction of chapter.
25-2-32.2.	Investigation of burn injuries reported pursuant to Code Section 25-2-32.1.	25-2-40.	Smoke detectors required in new dwellings and dwelling units; exceptions.
25-2-33.	Release of fire loss information by insurers on request by state or local official; immunity for furnishing of information; confidentiality of information received; testimony by officials in action against insurer.	25-2-41.	Use of class B fire-fighting foam containing intentionally added PFAS chemicals.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Office of Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner, Official

Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Comptroller General, Rule 120-2-.01 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Amendment by implication. — Although Ga. L. 1973, p. 890 (see now O.C.G.A. § 42-4-30 et seq.) deals, in part, with the same subject matter as Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-1 et seq.), i.e., fire safety standards for cer-

tain jails, the legislature, in enacting Ga. L. 1973, p. 890 (see now O.C.G.A. § 42-4-30 et seq.), did not intend to impliedly amend Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-1 et seq.) and such construction is not necessary for a reasonable

interpretation of Ga. L. 1973, p. 890 (see now O.C.G.A. § 42-4-30 et seq.). 1980 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 80-66.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.

Negligent Fire Inspection by City or State Employee, 22 POF2d 55.

25-2-1. Definition of Commissioner as Safety Fire Commissioner.

As used in this chapter, the term "Commissioner" means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

25-2-2. Creation of office of Safety Fire Commissioner.

The office of Safety Fire Commissioner is created. The Commissioner of Insurance shall be the Safety Fire Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 1; Ga. L. 1950, p. 320, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 855, § 9.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 48 et seq. 72 Am. Jur. 2d, States, Territories, and Dependencies, § 64.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 18, 389 et seq. 81A C.J.S., States, §§ 152, 153.

25-2-3. Duties, responsibilities, and delegation authority of Commissioner.

Except as provided in Code Section 25-2-12, the Commissioner is charged with the duties and chief responsibility for the enforcement of this chapter. He may, consistent with this chapter, delegate to the officers and employees appointed under this chapter such duties and powers as in his discretion he shall deem necessary or advisable for the proper enforcement of this chapter and shall have full supervision and control over such officers and employees in the performance of their duties or in the exercise of any powers granted to such officers and employees by him or by this chapter. Except as provided in Code Section 25-2-12, the Commissioner shall be the final authority in all matters relating to the interpretation and enforcement of this chapter, except insofar as his orders may be reversed or modified by the courts.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 2; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 1.

Cross references.

Manufactured homes generally, § 8-2-130 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Authorized actions. — In the absence of the state fire marshal, the Safety Fire Commissioner was authorized to act on an application for a license to maintain a

liquefied petroleum gas bulk distribution facility. *Safety Fire Comm'r v. U.S.A. Gas, Inc.*, 229 Ga. App. 807, 494 S.E.2d 706.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 221 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 323, 324.

25-2-4. Adoption of rules and regulations by Commissioner.

The Commissioner shall adopt such rules and regulations as he deems necessary to promote the enforcement of this chapter. Such rules and regulations shall have the force and effect of law and shall have state-wide application as being the state minimum fire safety standards and shall not require adoption by a municipality or county. The governing authority of any municipality or county in this state is authorized to enforce the state minimum fire safety standards on all buildings and structures except one-family and two-family dwellings and those buildings and structures listed in Code Section 25-2-13. All other applications of the state minimum fire safety standards and fees are specified in Code Sections 25-2-4.1, 25-2-12, and 25-2-12.1. Before the Commissioner shall adopt as a part of his rules and regulations for the enforcement of this chapter any of the principles of the various codes referred to in this chapter, he shall first consider and approve them as reasonably suitable for the enforcement of this chapter. Not less than 15 days before any rules and regulations are promulgated, a public hearing shall be held. Notice of the hearing shall be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 3; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 1.

Cross references.

Complying with filing and hearing requirements by Safety Fire Commissioner and Commissioner of Insurance, § 50-13-21.

Minimum Fire Safety Standards, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner for Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-3-.01 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for the State

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Failure to comply with safety standards. — Rules and regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner, having the force and effect of law, were applicable to the landlord of an apartment building and the landlord's failure to comply with man-

datory safety provisions of a fire or building exit code provided a clear and convincing evidentiary basis for an award of punitive damages. *Windermere, Ltd. v. Bettes*, 211 Ga. App. 177, 438 S.E.2d 406, 1993 Ga. App. LEXIS 1484 (1993).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 221 et seq. 72 Am. Jur. 2d, States, Territories, and Dependencies, § 64.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, § 1 et seq. 81A C.J.S., States, §§ 152 et seq., 230.

25-2-4.1. Permit, license, and inspection fees and charges.

(a) The Commissioner is authorized to assess and collect, and persons so assessed shall pay in advance to the Commissioner, fees and charges under this chapter as follows:

- (1) New anhydrous ammonia permit for storage in bulk (more than 2,000 gallons aggregate capacity) for sale or distribution one-time fee\$ 150.00
- (2) Annual license for manufacture of explosives other than fireworks 150.00
- (3) Annual license for manufacture, storage, or transport of fireworks 1,500.00
- (4) Carnival license 150.00
- (5) Certificate of occupancy 100.00
- (6) Construction plan review: 150.00
 - (A) Bulk storage construction 150.00
 - (B) Building construction, 10,000 square feet or less ... 150.00
 - (C) Building construction, more than 10,000 square feet 015
per square foot
 - (D) Other construction 150.00
- (7) Fire sprinkler contractor certificate of competency 150.00
- (8) Liquefied petroleum gas storage license:
 - (A) 2,000 gallons or less 150.00
 - (B) More than 2,000 gallons 600.00
- (9) Building construction inspection:
 - (A) 80 percent completion, 100 percent completion, annual, and first follow-up none
 - (B) Second follow-up 150.00
 - (C) Third and each subsequent follow-up 220.00

- (10) Purchase, storage, sale, transport, or use of explosives other than fireworks:
 - (A) 500 pounds or less 75.00
 - (B) More than 500 pounds 150.00
- (11) New self-service gasoline station permit one-time fee 150.00
- (12) New permit to dispense compressed natural gas (CNG) for vehicular fuel one-time fee 150.00

(b) The licenses and permits for which fees or charges are required pursuant to this Code section shall not be transferable. A new license or permit and fee are required upon change of ownership.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-4.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1992, p. 2725, § 4; Ga. L. 1993, p. 448, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-50/HB 1055.

1992, a hyphen was inserted between “one” and “time” in paragraph (11) (now paragraph (a)(11)).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-2-5. Appointment, qualifications, and salary of state fire marshal.

The Commissioner shall appoint a state fire marshal. Qualifications for appointment as state fire marshal shall be previous training and experience in endeavors similar to those prescribed in this chapter. The Commissioner shall fix the salary of the state fire marshal.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, §§ 48 et seq., 258 et seq. 72 Am. Jur. 2d, States, Territories and Dependencies, § 64.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 22, 46, 55 et seq., 389 et seq. 81A C.J.S., States, §§ 162, 163.

25-2-6. State fire marshal as head of Safety Fire Division.

The Safety Fire Division of the office of the Commissioner of Insurance shall be headed by the state fire marshal appointed by the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 1015, § 2; Ga. L. 1986, p. 855, § 10; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

25-2-7. Appointment process for deputy state fire marshal and other personnel.

The state fire marshal, subject to the approval of the Commissioner, shall appoint a deputy state fire marshal and administrative fire safety specialists and shall employ such office personnel as may be required to carry out this chapter. The deputy state fire marshal and administrative fire safety specialists shall be chosen by virtue of their previous training and experience in the particular duties which shall be assigned to them. They shall take an oath to perform faithfully the duties of their office.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 5; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Officers, §§ 22, 46, 55 et seq.

25-2-8. Payment of expenses of employees in state fire marshal's office.

All state employees connected with the state fire marshal's office shall be allowed subsistence, lodging, and other expenses in connection with the execution of their duties when away from their headquarters. Transportation for such employees shall be paid at the mileage rate fixed by law for other state employees.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 27.

state officials and employees, and reimbursement, § 50-19-7.

Cross references.

Mileage, actual travel expenses for

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 273 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, § 374 et seq.

25-2-9. Authority of state fire marshal and employees to investigate and arrest.

(a) Upon the request of the sheriff of the county, the chief of police of the jurisdiction, the district attorney of the judicial circuit, or a local fire official, the state fire marshal and any employees of such official shall have the authority to investigate the cause and origin of any fire which occurred in said county, jurisdiction, or judicial circuit.

(b) Personnel employed and authorized by the state fire marshal shall

have the power to make arrests for criminal violations established as a result of investigations. Such personnel must hold certification as a peace officer from the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council and shall have the power to execute arrest warrants and search warrants for criminal violations and to arrest, upon probable cause and without warrant, any person found violating any of the provisions of applicable criminal laws. Authorized personnel empowered to make arrests pursuant to this Code section shall be empowered to carry firearms as authorized by the state fire marshal in the performance of their duties. It shall be unlawful for any person to resist an arrest authorized by this Code section or to interfere in any manner, including abetting or assisting such resistance or interference, with personnel employed by the state fire marshal in the duties imposed upon such personnel by law.

History.

Ga. L. 1963, p. 509, § 1; Ga. L. 1972, p. 966, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 331, § 1.

Cross references.

Obstructing or hindering law enforcement officers, § 16-10-24.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

5 Am. Jur. 2d, Arrest, § 8 et seq. 79 Am. Jur. 2d, Weapons and Firearms, §§ 10, 22.

C.J.S.

94 C.J.S., Weapons, §§ 7, 8, 9, 51 et seq.

25-2-10. Appeal process and requirement for surety bond.

Should any person, firm, corporation, or public entity be dissatisfied with any ruling or decision of the state fire marshal, the right is granted to appeal within ten days to the Commissioner. If the person, firm, corporation, or public entity is dissatisfied with the decision of the Commissioner, appeal is authorized to the superior court within 30 days in the manner provided under Chapter 13 of Title 50. In the event of such appeal, the person, firm, corporation, or public entity shall give a surety bond which will be conditioned upon compliance with the order and direction of the state fire marshal or the Commissioner or both. The amount of bond shall be fixed by the Commissioner in such amount as will reasonably cover the order issued by the Commissioner or the state fire marshal or both.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 29; Ga. L. 1959, p. 50, § 2; Ga. L. 1972, p. 894, § 1.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Court cannot substitute judgment for Commissioner. — Even if the procedures of the Safety Fire Commissioner in acting on an application for a license to maintain a liquefied petroleum gas bulk

distribution facility were flawed, the superior court could not substitute the court's own judgment for that of the Commissioner. *Safety Fire Comm'r v. U.S.A. Gas, Inc.*, 229 Ga. App. 807, 494 S.E.2d 706.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law,
 §§ 364, 367 et seq., 408.

and Procedure, § 366 et seq. 67 C.J.S.,
 Officers and Public Employees, §§ 323,
 324.

C.J.S.

73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law

25-2-11. [Reserved] Local inspections — Duty of cities and counties generally; assistance of cities and counties by state fire marshal.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-11; repealed by Ga. L.
 1981, p. 1779, § 8, effective April 1, 1982.

served the designation of this Code section,
 effective April 24, 2013.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 25/HB 79, re-

25-2-12. State fire safety standards, enforcement, investigations, and variances.

(a)(1) The county governing authority in any county having a population of 100,000 or more, and the municipal governing authority in any municipality having a population of 45,000 or more, each as determined by the most recent decennial census published by the United States Bureau of the Census, and those municipalities pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section shall adopt the state minimum fire safety standards adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter, including all subsequent revisions thereof.

(2) With respect to those buildings and structures listed in Code Section 25-2-13, except for hospitals, nursing homes, jails, ambulatory health care centers, and penal institutions and except for buildings and structures which are owned and operated or occupied by the state, every such local governing authority shall be responsible for enforcing such fire safety standards within its jurisdiction and shall:

(A) Conduct fire safety inspections of existing buildings and structures;

(B) Review plans and specifications for proposed buildings and structures, issue building permits when plans are approved, and conduct fire safety inspections of such buildings and structures; and

(C) Issue permanent and temporary certificates of occupancy.

(3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed so as to prohibit fire service personnel of any such local governing authority from

making inspections of any state owned and operated or occupied building or structure listed in Code Section 25-2-13 and from filing reports of such inspections with the office of the Commissioner.

(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed so as to place upon any municipality, county, or any officer or employee thereof, the responsibility to take enforcement action regarding any existing building or structure listed in Code Section 25-2-13, if such building or structure was granted a certificate of occupancy pursuant to a waiver granted prior to January 1, 1982, and which was granted pursuant to the recommendation of the engineering staff over the objection of the local authority having jurisdiction.

(5) Every such local governing authority shall have the authority to charge and retain appropriate fees for performing the duties required in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) of this subsection. In cases where the governing authority of a municipality enforcing fire safety standards pursuant to this subsection contracts for the enforcement of fire safety standards, any municipal or county office or authority providing such enforcement shall not charge fees in excess of those charged in its own political subdivision for such enforcement.

(6) Every such local governing authority shall be responsible for investigating all cases of arson and other suspected incendiary fires within its jurisdiction, shall have the duties and powers authorized by Code Sections 25-2-27, 25-2-28, and 25-2-29 in carrying out such responsibility, and shall submit quarterly reports to the state fire marshal containing fire-loss data regarding all fires within its jurisdiction. The state fire marshal shall have the authority to initiate any arson investigation upon request of any such local governing authority and he shall provide assistance to the requesting authority regarding any of the duties and responsibilities required by this paragraph.

(7) No such local governing authority shall have the authority to grant any waiver or variance which would excuse any building, structure, or proposed plans for buildings or structures from compliance with the state minimum fire safety standards as adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(b) Municipalities having a population of less than 45,000 as determined by the most recent decennial census published by the United States Bureau of the Census may adopt the state minimum fire safety standards adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter, including all subsequent revisions thereof. The municipal governing authority shall indicate its intention to adopt and enforce the state minimum fire safety standards by forwarding a resolution so

indicating to the Commissioner. The municipality shall then adopt and enforce the state minimum fire safety standards as set forth in subsection (a) of this Code section.

(c) With respect to those buildings and structures listed in Code Section 25-2-13, in jurisdictions other than those jurisdictions covered under subsection (a) of this Code section, and with respect to every such hospital and every such building and structure owned and operated or occupied by the state, wherever located, the office of the Commissioner shall perform those duties specified in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section and shall perform all other duties required by this chapter.

(d) Except as specifically stated in this Code section, nothing in this Code section shall reduce or avoid the duties and responsibilities of the office of the Commissioner or the state fire marshal imposed by other Code sections of this chapter, other provisions of this Code, or any existing contract or agreement and all renewals thereof between the office of the Commissioner or the state fire marshal and any other state or federal government agency. Nothing in this Code section shall prohibit the office of the Commissioner, state fire marshal, or any local governing authority from entering into any future contract or agreement regarding any of the duties imposed under this Code section.

(e)(1) The office of the Commissioner shall be responsible for interpretations of the state minimum fire safety standards as adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(2) On the construction on existing buildings, local governments authorized to enforce the state minimum fire safety standards pursuant to subsection (a) and subsection (b) of this Code section, notwithstanding paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of this Code section, may grant variances from compliance with the state minimum fire safety standards as adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(3) On the construction on existing buildings not under the jurisdiction of a local government for purposes of paragraph (2) of this subsection, the Commissioner may grant variances from compliance with the state minimum fire safety standards as adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(4) On the construction of new buildings, the Commissioner, upon the written recommendation of the state fire marshal and the written request of the fire or building official responsible for enforcing the state minimum fire safety standards, may grant variances from compliance with the state minimum fire safety standards as adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter in jurisdictions covered under subsection (a) of this Code section and

jurisdictions other than those covered under subsection (a) of this Code section.

(5) Variances granted pursuant to paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of this subsection shall be as nearly equivalent as practical to the standards required in this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 6; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 3; Ga. L. 1982, p. 479, §§ 1, 4; Ga. L. 1984, p. 1160, § 2; Ga. L. 1985, p. 721, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 2; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

Law reviews.

For article, “Local Government Litigation: Some Pivotal Principles,” see 55 Mercer L. Rev. 1 (2003).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

City required to enforce fire safety standards against county building project within city limits. — County government is exempt from all municipal regulation of construction projects undertaken by the county with respect to county-owned property located within the city and used for governmental purposes, but the county is subject to other municipi-

pal regulations as indicated by the Georgia General Assembly such as fire safety standards, O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12, or compliance with the Erosion and Sedimentation Act, O.C.G.A. § 12-7-1 et seq. *City of Decatur v. DeKalb County*, 256 Ga. App. 46, 567 S.E.2d 376, 2002 Ga. App. LEXIS 821 (2002), cert. denied, No. S02C1630, 2002 Ga. LEXIS 845 (Ga. Sept. 16, 2002).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Implied power of repeal. — Since O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12(b) provides that certain municipal governing authorities may adopt and enforce the state minimum fire safety standards, it is implicit from the authorization to enact such an ordinance that the power to repeal is also provided to these authorities. 1982 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 82-66.

Duties of Commissioner as to build-

ings presenting special hazards. — Commissioner is charged with specific duties with respect to those buildings listed in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13 by the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12(c), which duties include performing fire safety inspections, reviewing building plans and specifications, and issuing certificates of occupancy. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Zoning: creation by statute or ordinance of restricted residence districts within municipality from which business buildings are excluded, 33 A.L.R. 287; 38 A.L.R. 1496; 43 A.L.R. 668; 54 A.L.R. 1030; 86 A.L.R. 659; 117 A.L.R. 1117.

Condemnation of premises by public authorities because of unsafe or unsanitary

condition as affecting the liability of the tenant for rent, 37 A.L.R. 1170.

Liability of owner or occupant of premises to building or construction inspector coming upon premises in discharge of duty, 28 A.L.R.3d 891.

Municipal liability for negligent fire inspection and subsequent enforcement, 69 A.L.R.4th 739.

25-2-12.1. Deputizing of local fire marshals, deputy local fire marshals, and state inspectors as state officers.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “Deputy local fire marshal” means any person who is employed by, supervised by, or otherwise assists a local fire marshal and who has been or is seeking to be deputized pursuant to this Code section.

(2) “Local fire marshal” means any employee or independent contractor of any municipality, county, or other governing authority not adopting the state minimum fire safety standards as provided in subsection (a) of Code Section 25-2-12 who is responsible for performing fire safety duties for such municipality, county, or governing authority and who has been or is seeking to be deputized pursuant to this Code section.

(3) “State inspector” means any person who is employed by any board, commission, or other administrative authority of any state owned and operated or occupied facility, who is responsible for performing fire safety duties within such facility, and who has been or is seeking to be deputized pursuant to this Code section.

(b) Upon application submitted by any governing authority or administrative authority described in subsection (a) of this Code section, the state fire marshal, subject to the approval of the Commissioner and in accordance with this Code section, shall have the authority to deputize local fire marshals, deputy local fire marshals, or state inspectors, as appropriate, as state officers. The application shall be verified by an appropriate official and shall contain the name, address, and current place of employment for each applicant seeking to be deputized and the dates and places of past employment, educational background, training experience, any area of specialization and the basis therefor, and such other information as may be required by the state fire marshal.

(c)(1) Prior to deputizing any local fire marshal, deputy local fire marshal, or state inspector, the state fire marshal shall examine the applicant’s education, training, and employment experience to ascertain whether the applicant is qualified to perform duties in one or more of the following areas:

- (A) Fire safety inspections;
- (B) Review of plans and specifications; or
- (C) Arson investigations.

(2) If the state fire marshal is satisfied that the applicant is qualified, he shall recommend to the Commissioner that the appli-

cant be deputized as a state officer to perform the appropriate duties on behalf of the state.

(d) It shall be the responsibility of the governing authority to notify the state fire marshal when a local fire marshal is no longer employed by or accountable to such governing authority. It shall be the responsibility of the local fire marshal to ensure that his deputy local fire marshals perform their appointed duties and to notify the state fire marshal when a deputy local fire marshal is no longer employed under his authority. It shall be the responsibility of the administrative authority to ensure that state inspectors perform their appointed duties and to notify the state fire marshal when a state inspector is no longer employed by such administrative authority.

(e) All deputized local fire marshals, deputy local fire marshals, and state inspectors shall submit monthly reports of their activities to the state fire marshal and shall comply with the administrative procedures of the state fire marshal's office. Any deputized local fire marshal, deputy local fire marshal, or state inspector who is found by the state fire marshal to be negligent in performing his appointed duties or in fulfilling his responsibilities shall be removed from his position as a state officer.

History.

Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 4; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25; Ga. L. 1982, p. 479, §§ 2, 5.

25-2-13. Fire safety requirements for buildings or structures presenting special hazards.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) "Capacity" means the maximum number of persons who may be reasonably expected to be present in any building or on any floor thereof at a given time according to the use which is made of such building. The Commissioner shall determine and by rule declare the formula for determining capacity for each of the uses described in this Code section.

(2) "Historic building or structure" means any individual building or any building which contributes to the historic character of a historic district, so designated by the state historic preservation officer pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Community Affairs, or as so designated pursuant to the provisions of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 44, the "Georgia Historic Preservation Act."

(3) "Landmark museum building" means a historic building or structure used as an exhibit of the building or structure itself which

exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity and which is open to the public not fewer than 12 days per year; however, additional uses, original or ancillary, to the use as a museum shall be permitted within the same building subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of this Code section. Landmark museum buildings must be so designated by the state historic preservation officer pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Community Affairs.

(b)(1) Certain buildings and structures, because of construction or use, may constitute a special hazard to property or to the life and safety of persons on account of fire or panic from fear of fire. Buildings constructed or used in the following manner present such a special hazard:

(A) Buildings or structures more than three stories in height; provided, however, that nothing in this Code section shall apply to any individually owned residential unit within any such building;

(B) Any building three or more stories in height and used as a residence by three or more families, with individual cooking and bathroom facilities for each family; provided, however, that nothing in this Code section shall apply to any individually owned residential unit within any such building;

(C) Any building in which there are more than 15 sleeping accommodations for hire, with or without meals but without individual cooking facilities, whether designated as a hotel, motel, inn, club, dormitory, rooming or boarding house, or by any other name;

(D) Any building or group of buildings which contain schools and academies for any combination of grades one through 12 having more than 15 children or students in attendance at any given time and all state funded kindergarten programs;

(E) Hospitals, health care centers, mental health institutions, orphanages, nursing homes, convalescent homes, old age homes, jails, prisons, reformatories, and all administrative, public assembly, and academic buildings of colleges, universities, and vocational-technical schools. As used in this subparagraph, the terms "nursing homes," "convalescent homes," and "old age homes" mean any building used for the lodging, personal care, or nursing care on a 24 hour basis of four or more invalids, convalescents, or elderly persons who are not members of the same family;

(F) Racetracks, stadiums, and grandstands;

(G) Theaters, auditoriums, restaurants, bars, lounges, night-clubs, dance halls, recreation halls, and other places of public assembly having an occupant load of 300 or more persons, except that the occupant load shall be 100 or more persons in those buildings where alcoholic beverages are served;

(G.1) Churches having an occupant load of 500 or more persons in a common area or having an occupant load greater than 1,000 persons based on total occupant load of the building or structure;

(H) Department stores and retail mercantile establishments having a gross floor area of 25,000 square feet on any one floor or having three or more floors that are open to the public. For purposes of this subparagraph, shopping centers and malls shall be assessed upon the basis of the entire area covered by the same roof or sharing common walls; provided, however, that nothing in this Code section shall apply to single-story malls or shopping centers subdivided into areas of less than 25,000 square feet by a wall or walls with a two-hour fire resistance rating and where there are unobstructed exit doors in the front and rear of every such individual occupancy which open directly to the outside;

(I) Child care learning centers, as such term is defined in Code Section 20-1A-2. Fire safety standards adopted by rules of the Commissioner pursuant to Code Section 25-2-4 which are applicable to child care learning centers shall not require staff-to-child ratios; and

(J) Personal care homes and assisted living communities required to be licensed as such by the Department of Community Health and having at least seven beds for nonfamily adults, and the Commissioner shall, pursuant to Code Section 25-2-4, by rule adopt state minimum fire safety standards for those homes, and any structure constructed as or converted to a personal care home on or after April 15, 1986, shall be deemed to be a proposed building pursuant to subsection (d) of Code Section 25-2-14 and that structure may be required to be furnished with a sprinkler system meeting the standards established by the Commissioner if he deems this necessary for proper fire safety.

(2) Any building or structure which is used exclusively for agricultural purposes and which is located in an unincorporated area shall be exempt from the classification set forth in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3)(A) The provisions of this paragraph relating to landmark museum buildings shall apply only to those portions of such buildings which meet all the requirements of a landmark museum building, except as otherwise provided in subparagraphs (B) and

(C) of this paragraph. Subparagraphs (B) and (C) of this paragraph shall, unless otherwise provided in such subparagraphs, preempt all state laws, regulations, or rules governing reconstruction, alteration, repair, or maintenance of landmark museum buildings. Local governing authorities may recognize the designation of landmark museum buildings by ordinance and authorize the local enforcement authority to incorporate the provisions of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of this paragraph into their local building and fire codes. Subparagraphs (D) and (E) of this paragraph shall apply to other historic buildings or structures.

(B) A landmark museum building shall be subject to the following provisions:

(i) Repairs, maintenance, and restoration shall be allowed without conformity to any state building or fire safety related code, standard, rule, or regulation, provided the building is brought into and remains in full compliance with this paragraph;

(ii) In the case of fire or other casualty to a landmark museum building, it may be rebuilt, in total or in part, using such techniques and materials as are necessary to restore it to the condition prior to the fire or casualty and use as a totally preserved building; or

(iii) If a historic building or structure, as a result of proposed work or changes in use, would become eligible and would be so certified as a landmark museum building, and the state historic preservation officer so certifies and such is submitted to the state fire and building code official with the construction or building permit application, then the work may proceed under the provisions of this paragraph.

(C) All landmark museum buildings shall comply with the following requirements:

(i) Every landmark museum building shall have portable fire extinguishers as deemed appropriate by the state or local fire authority having jurisdiction based on the applicable state or local fire safety codes or regulations;

(ii) All landmark museum buildings which contain residential units shall have electrically powered smoke or products of combustion detectors installed within each living unit between living and sleeping areas. Such detectors shall be continuously powered by the building's electrical system. When activated, the detector shall initiate an alarm which is audible in sleeping rooms of that living unit. These unit detectors shall be required in addition to any other protective system that may be installed in the building;

(iii) For all landmark museum buildings, except those protected by a total automatic fire suppression system and one and two family dwellings, approved automatic fire warning protection shall be provided as follows: install at least one listed smoke or products of combustion detector for every 1,200 square feet of floor area per floor or story. In addition, all lobbies, common corridors, hallways, and ways of exit access shall be provided with listed smoke or products of combustion detectors not more than 30 feet apart. Detectors shall be so connected as to sound an alarm audible throughout the structure or building. With respect to buildings which are totally protected by an automatic fire suppression system, activation of the sprinkler system shall sound an alarm throughout the structure or building;

(iv) Smoke or products of combustion detectors shall be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory;

(v) All multistory landmark museum buildings, except one and two family dwellings, with occupancy above or below the street or grade level shall have manual fire alarm pull stations in the natural path of egress. The activation of a manual pull station shall cause the building fire warning system to sound;

(vi) Approved exit signs shall be located where designated by the local or state authority having jurisdiction in accordance with the applicable state or local code, standard, rule, or regulation;

(vii) Except for one and two family dwellings, every landmark museum building occupied after daylight, or which has occupied areas subject to being totally darkened during daylight hours due to a power failure or failure of the electrical system, shall be equipped with approved emergency lighting meeting the provisions of the applicable state or local code, standard, rule, or regulation;

(viii) Occupant loading of landmark museum buildings or structures shall be limited by either the actual structural floor load capacity or by the limitations of means of egress or by a combination of factors. Actual floor load capacity shall be determined by a Georgia registered professional engineer. Said floor load shall be posted at a conspicuous location. The building owner shall submit evidence of this certification and related computations to the enforcement authority having jurisdiction, upon request. Where one or more floors of a landmark museum building have only one means of egress, the occupant load shall be computed and occupancy limited as determined by the state or local fire marshal; and

(ix) The electrical, heating, and mechanical systems of landmark museum buildings shall be inspected and any conditions that create a threat of fire or a threat to life shall be corrected in accordance with applicable standards to the extent deemed necessary by the state or local authority having jurisdiction.

(D) Historic buildings not classified as landmark museum buildings shall meet the requirements of applicable state or local building and fire safety laws, ordinances, codes, standards, rules, or regulations as they pertain to existing buildings. If a historic building or structure is damaged from fire or other casualty, it may be restored to the condition prior to the fire or casualty using techniques and methods consistent with its original construction, or it shall meet the requirements for new construction of the applicable state or local codes, standards, rules, or regulations, provided these requirements do not significantly compromise the features for which the building was considered historically significant.

(E) As to any buildings or structures in the State of Georgia which meet the criteria of paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code section and thus fall under the jurisdiction of the Safety Fire Commissioner and which also have been designated as historically significant by the state historic preservation officer, the appropriate enforcement official, in granting or denying a variance pursuant to subsection (e) of Code Section 25-2-12, shall consider the intent of this chapter, with special attention to paragraph (3) of this subsection, Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 8, "The Uniform Act for the Application of Building and Fire Related Codes to Existing Buildings," Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 44, the "Georgia Historic Preservation Act," and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Preservation Projects.

(4) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as exempting any building, structure, facility, or premises from ordinances enacted by any municipal governing authority in any incorporated area or any county governing authority in any unincorporated area, except to the extent stated in paragraph (3) of this subsection relative to landmark museum buildings or historic buildings or structures.

(c) Every person who owns or controls the use of any building, part of a building, or structure described in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code section, which, because of floor area, height, location, use or intended use as a gathering place for large groups, or use or intended use by or for the aged, the ill, the incompetent, or the imprisoned, constitutes a special hazard to property or to the life and safety of persons on account of fire or panic from fear of fire, must so construct, equip, maintain, and use such building or structure as to afford every

reasonable and practical precaution and protection against injury from such hazards. No person who owns or controls the use or occupancy of such a building or structure shall permit the use of the premises so controlled for any such specially hazardous use unless he has provided such precautions against damage to property or injury to persons by these hazards as are found and determined by the Commissioner in the manner described in subsection (d) of this Code section to be reasonable and practical.

(d) The Commissioner is directed to investigate and examine construction and engineering techniques; properties of construction materials, fixtures, facilities, and appliances used in, upon, or in connection with buildings and structures; and fire prevention and protective techniques, including, but not limited to, the codes and standards adopted, recommended, or issued from time to time by the National Fire Protection Association (National Fire Code and National Electric Code), the American Insurance Association (National Building Code), the successor to the National Board of Fire Underwriters, the American Standards Association, and the Standard Building Code Congress (Southern Standard Building Code). Based upon such investigation, the Commissioner is authorized to determine and by rule to provide what reasonable and practical protection must be afforded property and persons with respect to: exits; fire walls and internal partitions adequate to resist fire and to retard the spread of fire, smoke, heat, and gases; electrical wiring, electrical appliances, and electrical installations; safety and protective devices, including, but not limited to, fire escapes, fire prevention equipment, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, panic hardware, fire alarm and detection systems, exit lights, emergency auxiliary lights, and other similar safety devices; flame-proofing; motion picture equipment and projection booths; and similar facilities; provided, however, that any building described in subparagraph (b)(1)(C) of this Code section shall be required to have a smoke or products of combustion detector listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory; and, regardless of the manufacturer's instructions, such detectors in these buildings shall be located in all interior corridors, halls, and basements no more than 30 feet apart or more than 15 feet from any wall; where there are no interior halls or corridors, the detectors shall be installed in each sleeping room. All detection systems permitted after April 1, 1992, shall be powered from the building's electrical system and all detection systems required by this chapter, permitted after April 1, 1992, shall have a one and one-half hour emergency power supply source. Required corridor smoke detector systems shall be electrically interconnected to the fire alarm, if a fire alarm is required. If a fire alarm is not required, the detectors at a minimum shall be approved single station detectors powered from the building electrical service.

(e) All rules and regulations promulgated before April 1, 1968, by the Commissioner or the state fire marshal and the minimum fire safety standards adopted therein shall remain in full force and effect where applicable until such time as they are amended by the appropriate authority.

(f) The municipal governing authority in any incorporated area or the county governing authority in any unincorporated area of the state shall have the authority to enact such ordinances as it deems necessary to perform fire safety inspections and related activities for those buildings and structures not covered in this Code section.

(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or any local ordinance to the contrary, in the event of a conflict between any code or standard of the National Fire Protection Association (National Fire Code and National Electric Code) and of the Standard Building Code Congress (Southern Standard Building Code), the code or standard of the National Fire Protection Association (National Fire Code and National Electric Code) shall prevail. The order of precedence established by this subsection shall apply to all buildings and structures whether or not such buildings and structures are covered under this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 8; Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 1; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, §§ 5, 6; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25; Ga. L. 1984, p. 1160, §§ 3-6; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 25; Ga. L. 1985, p. 869, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 936, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1642, § 2; Ga. L. 1987, p. 3, § 25; Ga. L. 1988, p. 668, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 815, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1989, p. 918, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 1795, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1500, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, §§ 3, 4; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1632, § 2; Ga. L. 2004, p. 645, § 4; Ga. L. 2008, p. 12, § 2-6/SB 433; Ga. L. 2011, p. 227, § 6/SB 178; Ga. L. 2013, p. 135, § 12/HB 354; Ga. L. 2015, p. 965, § 4/HB 401; Ga. L. 2020, p. 38, § 10/SB 473.

Cross references.

Construction standards and requirements for buildings and other structures generally, § 8-2-1 et seq.

Duties of Commissioner with regard to enforcement of laws relating to access to and use of public buildings and facilities by the physically disabled, § 30-3-5.

Required safety and security measures for detention facilities, § 42-4-31.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1985, p. 1642, § 3, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that nothing in that Act would amend or repeal the definitions contained in T. 49, C. 5.

Administrative rules and regulations.

International Fire Code IFC, 2018 Edition, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes, Rule 110-11-1-.29.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Authority of Board of Offender Rehabilitation (now Board of Corrections) to set standard for construction of prison dormitories. — Board of

Offender Rehabilitation (now Board of Corrections) has authority to require construction of a prison dormitory of any standard, so long as the standard is not

below that set by the Georgia Safety Fire Commission. 1954-56 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 526.

Authority of the Commissioner to investigate potential fire hazards upon written complaint under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-22(b) is not limited to the buildings and premises listed in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13, nor otherwise limited as to the type of building or premises. 1990 Op. Att'y Gen. 90-4.

Duties of Commissioner as to O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13. — Commissioner is charged with specific duties with respect to those buildings listed in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13 by the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12(c), which duties include performing fire safety inspections, reviewing building plans and specifications, and issuing certificates of occupancy. 1990 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 90-4.

Commissioner has no duty to inspect certain abandoned buildings. — Abandoned building, which is three stories or less in height, which does not otherwise fall within the list of buildings in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13 is not subject to inspection and licensing under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12. The Commissioner therefore has no duty to inspect such a building. 1990 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 90-4.

Safety Fire Commissioner has authority to adopt rules and regulations which pertain to safety and protection of public at race tracks so long as there is a relationship between the rules and regulations adopted and the duties and responsibilities entrusted to the Commissioner under the Safety Fire Commissioner Act. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-355.

Jurisdiction over condominiums. — Plain language of the 1981 amendments to O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13 clearly demonstrates the legislative intention to exclude condominiums from the jurisdiction of the Commissioner. The passage of the amendment indicates that the General Assembly believed that the previous exclusion failed to include condominiums, and hence felt some need to broaden that exclusion. 1981 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 81-49.

The office of the Commissioner has jurisdiction only over the common areas or elements (such as boiler rooms or recreation facilities) of condominium buildings otherwise classified as constituting a special hazard to the life and safety of persons in the event of fire. 1981 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 81-49.

Permit applicant to obtain approval of fire marshal before permit issued. — Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14) imposes a duty on local governments to refrain from issuing a building permit for the construction of a proposed building which comes under classification in Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 1 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13) until the permit applicant has obtained the approval of the fire marshal in accordance with Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14). 1980 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 80-102.

Board of regents should continue to submit to state fire marshal only those plans and specifications for proposed buildings which come under classifications set out in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13. 1982 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 82-65.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 22 et seq.
58 Am. Jur. 2d, Nuisances, § 4 et seq.

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

1C Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms, Amusements and Exhibitions, § 2.

C.J.S.

39A C.J.S., Health & Environment, § 47 et seq. 66 C.J.S., Nuisances, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statute or ordinance requiring proprietor of place of amusement to furnish fire or police protection at his own expense, 8 A.L.R. 1628.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

Validity, construction, and application of the Uniform Fire Code, 46 A.L.R.5th 479.

Validity, construction, and effect of agreement exempting operator of amusement facility from liability for personal injury or death of patron, 54 A.L.R.5th 513.

Validity and construction of statute or ordinance requiring installation of automatic sprinklers, 63 A.L.R.5th 517.

25-2-14. Review of plans and specifications of buildings or structures presenting special hazards.

(a)(1) Plans and specifications for all proposed buildings which come under classification in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 and which come under the jurisdiction of the office of the Commissioner pursuant to Code Section 25-2-12 shall be submitted to and receive approval by either the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, or state inspector before any state, municipal, or county building permit may be issued or construction started. All such plans and specifications submitted as required by this subsection shall be accompanied by a fee in the amount provided in Code Section 25-2-4.1 and shall bear the seal and Georgia registration number of the drafting architect or engineer or shall otherwise have the approval of the Commissioner.

(2)(A) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official cannot provide plan review within 30 business days of receiving a written application for permitting in accordance with the code official's plan submittal process, then, in lieu of plan review by personnel employed by such governing authority, any person, firm, or corporation engaged in a construction project which requires plan review, regardless if the plan review is required by subsection (a) of this Code section or by local county or municipal ordinance, shall have the option of retaining, at its own expense, a private professional provider to provide the required plan review. As used in this paragraph, the term "private professional provider" means a professional engineer who holds a certificate of registration issued under Chapter 15 of Title 43 or a professional architect who holds a certificate of registration issued under Chapter 4 of Title 43, who is not an employee of or otherwise affiliated with or financially interested in the person, firm, or corporation engaged in the construction project to be reviewed.

(B) The state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall advise the permit applicant at the time the complete submittal application for a permit in accordance with the code official's plan submittal process is received that the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official intends to complete the required plan review within the time prescribed by

this paragraph or that the applicant may immediately secure the services of a private professional provider to complete the required plan review pursuant to this subsection. The plan submittal process shall include those procedures and approvals required by the local jurisdiction before plan review can take place. If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official states its intent to complete the required plan review within the time prescribed by this paragraph, the applicant shall not be authorized to use the services of a private professional provider as provided in this subsection. The permit applicant and the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official may agree by mutual consent to extend the time period prescribed by this paragraph for plan review if the characteristics of the project warrant such an extension. However, if the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official states its intent to complete the required plan review within the time prescribed by this paragraph, or any extension thereof mutually agreed to by the applicant and the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official and does not permit the applicant to use the services of a private professional provider and the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official fails to complete such plan review in the time prescribed by this paragraph, or any extension thereof mutually agreed to by the applicant and the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall issue the applicant a project initiation permit to allow the applicant to begin work on the project, provided that portion of the initial phase of work is compliant with applicable codes, laws, and rules. If a full permit is not issued for the portion requested for permitting, then the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall have an additional 20 business days to complete the review and issue the full permit. If the plans submitted for permitting are denied for any deficiency, the time frames and process for resubmittal shall be governed by divisions (2)(H)(iii) through (2)(H)(v) of this subsection.

(C) Any plan review or inspection conducted by a private professional provider shall be no less extensive than plan reviews or inspections conducted by state, county, or municipal personnel responsible for review of plans for compliance with the state's minimum fire safety standards and, where applicable, the state's minimum accessibility standards.

(D) The person, firm, or corporation retaining a private professional provider to conduct a plan review shall be required to pay to the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official which requires the plan review the same regulatory fees and charges which would have been required had the plan review been conducted by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official.

(E) A private professional provider performing plan reviews under this subsection shall review construction plans to determine compliance with the state's minimum fire safety standards in effect which were adopted pursuant to this chapter and, where applicable, the state's minimum accessibility standards adopted pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 30. Upon determining that the plans reviewed comply with the applicable codes and standards as adopted, such private professional provider shall prepare an affidavit or affidavits on a form prescribed by the Safety Fire Commissioner certifying under oath that the following is true and correct to the best of such private professional provider's knowledge and belief and in accordance with the applicable professional standard of care:

(i) The plans were reviewed by the affiant who is duly authorized to perform plan review pursuant to this subsection and who holds the appropriate license or certifications and insurance coverage and insurance coverage stipulated in this subsection; and

(ii) The plans comply with the state's minimum fire safety standards in effect which were adopted pursuant to this chapter and, where applicable, the state's minimum accessibility standards adopted pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 30.

(F) All private professional providers providing plan review services pursuant to this subsection shall secure and maintain insurance coverage for professional liability (errors and omissions) insurance. The limits of such insurance shall be not less than \$1 million per claim and \$1 million in aggregate coverage. Such insurance may be a practice policy or project-specific coverage. If the insurance is a practice policy, it shall contain prior acts coverage for the private professional provider. If the insurance is project-specific, it shall continue in effect for two years following the issuance of the certificate of final completion for the project. The state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official may establish, for private professional providers working within their respective jurisdictions specified by this chapter, a system of registration listing the

private professional providers within their areas of competency and verifying compliance with the insurance requirements of this subsection.

(G) The private professional provider shall be empowered to perform any plan review required by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official, regardless if the plan review is required by this subsection or by local county or municipal ordinance, provided that the plan review is within the scope of such private professional provider's area of expertise and competency. This subsection shall not apply to hospitals, ambulatory health care centers, nursing homes, jails, penal institutions, airports, buildings or structures that impact national or state homeland security, or any building defined as a high-rise building in the State Minimum Standards Code, provided that interior tenant build-out projects within high-rise buildings are not exempt from this subsection, or plans related to Code Section 25-2-16 or 25-2-17 or Chapter 8, 9, or 10 of this title.

(H)(i) The permit applicant shall submit a copy of the private professional provider's plan review report to the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official. Such plan review report shall include at a minimum all of the following:

(I) The affidavit of the private professional provider required pursuant to this subsection;

(II) The applicable fees required for permitting;

(III) Other documents deemed necessary due to unusual construction or design, smoke removal systems where applicable with engineering analysis, and additional documentation required where performance based code options are used; and

(IV) Any documents required by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official to determine that the permit applicant has secured all other governmental approvals required by law.

(ii) No more than 30 business days after receipt of a permit application and the private professional provider's plan review report required pursuant to this subsection, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall issue the requested permit or provide written notice to the permit applicant identifying the specific plan features that do not comply with the applicable codes or standards, as well as the specific reference to the relevant require-

ments. If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official does not provide a written notice of the plan deficiencies within the prescribed 30 day period, the permit application shall be deemed approved as a matter of law and the permit shall be issued by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official on the next business day.

(iii) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official provides a written notice of plan deficiencies to the permit applicant within the prescribed 30 day period, the 30 day period shall be tolled pending resolution of the matter. To resolve the plan deficiencies, the permit applicant may elect to dispute the deficiencies pursuant to this chapter, the promulgated rules and regulations adopted thereunder, or, where appropriate for existing buildings, the local governing authority's appeals process or the permit applicant may submit revisions to correct the deficiencies.

(iv) If the permit applicant submits revisions, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall have the remainder of the tolled 30 day period plus an additional five business days to issue the requested permit or to provide a second written notice to the permit applicant stating which of the previously identified plan features remain in noncompliance with the applicable codes or standards, with specific reference to the relevant requirements. If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official does not provide the second written notice within the prescribed time period, the permit shall be issued by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official on the next business day.

(v) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official provides a second written notice of plan deficiencies to the permit applicant within the prescribed time period, the permit applicant may elect to dispute the deficiencies pursuant to this chapter, the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, or, where applicable for existing buildings, the local governing authority's appeals process or the permit applicant may submit additional revisions to correct the deficiencies. For all revisions submitted after the first revision, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall have an additional five business days to issue the requested permit or to provide a written notice to the permit applicant stating which of

the previously identified plan features remain in noncompliance with the applicable codes or standards, with specific reference to the relevant requirements.

(I) The state fire marshal may provide for the prequalification of private professional providers who may perform plan reviews pursuant to this subsection by rule or regulation authorized in Code Section 25-2-4. In addition, any local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official may provide for the prequalification of private professional providers who may perform plan reviews pursuant to this subsection; however, no additional local ordinance implementing prequalification shall become effective until notice of the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official's intent to require prequalification and the specific requirements for prequalification have been advertised in the newspaper in which the sheriff's advertisements for that locality are published. The ordinance implementing prequalification shall provide for evaluation of the qualifications of a private professional provider only on the basis of the private professional provider's expertise with respect to the objectives of this subsection, as demonstrated by the private professional provider's experience, education, and training. Such ordinance may require a private professional provider to hold additional certifications, provided that such certifications are required by ordinance or state law for plan review personnel currently directly employed by such local governing authority.

(J) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit any public or private right of action designed to provide protection, rights, or remedies for consumers.

(K) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official determines that the building construction or plans do not comply with the applicable codes or standards, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official may deny the permit or request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion, as appropriate, or may issue a stop-work order for the project or any portion thereof as provided by law or rule or regulation, after giving notice and opportunity to remedy the violation, if the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official determines that non-compliance exists with state laws, adopted codes or standards, or local ordinances, provided that:

(i) The state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall be available to meet with the private professional provider within two business days

to resolve any dispute after issuing a stop-work order or providing notice to the applicant denying a permit or request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion; and

(ii) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official and the private professional provider are unable to resolve the dispute, the matter shall be referred to the local enforcement agency's board of appeals, except as provided in Code Section 25-2-12 and appeals for those proposed buildings classified under paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 or any existing building under the specific jurisdiction of the state fire marshal's office shall be made to the state fire marshal and further appeal shall be under Code Section 25-2-10.

(L) The state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, local government, designated code official enforcement personnel, or agents of the governing authority shall be immune from liability to any person or party for any action or inaction by an owner of a building or by a private professional provider or its duly authorized representative in connection with building plan review services by private professional providers as provided in this subsection.

(M) Except as provided in this paragraph, no proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official shall adopt or enforce any rules, procedures, policies, or standards more stringent than those prescribed in this subsection related to private professional provider services.

(N) Nothing in this subsection shall limit the authority of the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official to issue a stop-work order for a building project or any portion of such project, as provided by law or rule or regulation authorized pursuant to Code Section 25-2-4, after giving notice and opportunity to remedy the violation, if the official determines that a condition on the building site constitutes an immediate threat to public safety and welfare.

(O) When performing building code plan reviews related to determining compliance with the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes most recently adopted by the Department of Community Affairs, the state's minimum fire safety standards adopted by the safety fire marshal, or the state's minimum accessibility standards pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 30, a private professional provider is subject to the disciplinary guidelines of the applicable professional licensing board with jurisdiction over such private professional provider's license or certification under

Chapters 4 and 15 of Title 43, as applicable. Any complaint processing, investigation, and discipline that arise out of a private professional provider's performance of the adopted building, fire safety, or accessibility codes or standards plan review services shall be conducted by the applicable professional licensing board or as allowed by state rule or regulation. Notwithstanding any disciplinary rules of the applicable professional licensing board with jurisdiction over such private professional provider's license or certification under Chapters 4 and 15 of Title 43, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official enforcement personnel may decline to accept building plan reviews submitted by any private professional provider who has submitted multiple reports which required revisions due to negligence, noncompliance, or deficiencies.

(b) A complete set of approved plans and specifications shall be maintained on the construction site, and construction shall proceed in compliance with the minimum fire safety standards under which such plans and specifications were approved. The owner of any such building or structure or his authorized representative shall notify the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, or state inspector upon completion of approximately 80 percent of the construction thereof and shall apply for a certificate of occupancy when construction of such building or structure is completed.

(c) Every building or structure which comes under classification in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 and which comes under the jurisdiction of the office of the Commissioner pursuant to Code Section 25-2-12 shall have a certificate of occupancy issued by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, or the state inspector before such building or structure may be occupied. Such certificates of occupancy shall be issued for each business establishment within the building, shall carry a charge in the amount provided in Code Section 25-2-4.1, shall state the occupant load for such business establishment or building, shall be posted in a prominent location within such business establishment or building, and shall run for the life of the building, except as provided in subsection (d) of this Code section.

(d) For purposes of this chapter, any existing building or structure listed in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 and which comes under the jurisdiction of the office of the Commissioner pursuant to Code Section 25-2-12 shall be deemed to be a proposed building in the event such building or structure is subject to substantial renovation, a fire or other hazard of serious consequence, or a change in the classification of occupancy. For purposes of this subsection, the term "substantial renovation" means any construction project involving exits

or internal features of such building or structure costing more than the building's or structure's assessed value according to county tax records at the time of such renovation.

(e) In cases where the governing authority of a municipality which is enforcing the fire safety standards pursuant to subsection (a) of Code Section 25-2-12 contracts with the office of the Commissioner for the enforcement of fire safety standards, the office of the Commissioner shall not charge such municipality fees in excess of those charged in this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 9; Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 2; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 7; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25; Ga. L. 1982, p. 479, §§ 3,

6; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 5; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2725, § 5; Ga. L. 2006, p. 506, § 2/HB 1385.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Term "building permit" is used in reference to permits issued by local governments. 1980 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 80-102.

Permit applicant to obtain approval of fire marshal before permit issued. — Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14) imposes a duty on local governments to refrain from issuing a building permit for the construction of a proposed building which comes under classification in Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 1 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13) until the permit applicant has obtained the approval of the fire marshal in accordance with Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14). 1980 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 80-102.

Approval of plans generally. — Approval of proposed building plans submitted pursuant to the Fire Safety Code is governed by O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14, not O.C.G.A. § 43-4-15, relating to architects. 1987 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 87-8.

State fire marshal can approve any set of plans which come under the marshal's jurisdiction and which are under the classifications enumerated in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14 regardless of what features the plans

contain, if the plans have the seal of either an architect or an engineer or otherwise have the approval of the commissioner and are in compliance with other applicable codes. 1987 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 87-8.

Approval of plans on jail. — State fire marshal may approve a set of plans on a jail, regardless of costs, square footage, or height of the building, if those plans bear the seal and Georgia registration number of the drafting engineer and are otherwise in compliance with the law. 1987 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 87-8.

Board of regents should continue to submit to state fire marshal only those plans and specifications for proposed buildings which come under the classifications set out in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13. 1982 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 82-65.

Submission of plans by registered interior designers. — Registered interior designers are authorized to sign and seal documents related to nonstructural interior construction for their submission to building officials or fire marshals for permitting purposes to the extent that it does not conflict with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-14. 2017 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U17-1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 22 et seq.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 76 et seq.

25-2-14.1. Compliance of buildings and structures presenting special hazards with minimum fire safety standards.

(a) Every building and structure existing as of April 1, 1968, which building or structure is listed in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 shall comply with the minimum fire safety standards adopted in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter which were in effect at the time such building or structure was constructed, except that any nonconformance noted under the electrical standards adopted at the time such building or structure was constructed shall be corrected in accordance with the current electrical standards adopted pursuant to this chapter. A less restrictive provision contained in any subsequently adopted minimum fire safety standard may be applied to any existing building or structure.

(b) Every proposed building and structure listed in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 shall comply with the adopted minimum fire safety standards that were in effect on the date that plans and specifications therefor were received by the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, or state inspector for review and approval.

History.

Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 8; Ga. L. 1989, p. 815, § 3.

25-2-14.2. Authority of state fire marshal to deny permit or request for certificate or to issue stop-work order.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “written notification” means a typed, printed, or handwritten notice citing the specific sections of the applicable codes or standards that have been violated and describing specifically where and how the design or construction is noncompliant with such codes or standards.

(b) If the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official determines that the building construction or plans for any building or structure, which are required under this chapter to meet the state minimum fire safety standards, do not comply with any such applicable codes or standards, the state fire marshal, the proper local fire marshal, state inspector, or designated code official may deny a permit or request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion, as appropriate, or may issue a stop-work order for the project or any portion thereof as provided by law or rule or regulation, after giving written notification and opportunity to remedy the violation.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-14.2, enacted by Ga. L. 2014, p. 379, § 1/SB 305.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2014, p. 379, § 2/SB 305, not codified by the General Assembly, pro-

vides, in part, that this Code section shall be applicable to any application for a permit, request for a certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion, and stop work order submitted or issued on or after July 1, 2014.

25-2-15. Temporary occupancy permits for buildings presenting special hazards.

In existing buildings which come under the classification in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13, when substandard conditions are found, a temporary occupancy permit may be issued, such permit carrying a time limit adjusted to meet the amount of time deemed necessary to make the proper corrections in order to bring the building up to standard. All certificates of occupancy shall be issued against the building and shall not require renewal because of change of ownership. The same set of fees for certificates of occupancy as are applicable to proposed buildings covered in Code Section 25-2-14 shall apply. The Commissioner and his delegated authorities shall determine the time limit for complying with any of the standards established pursuant to this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 10; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 25.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 22 et seq.

25-2-16. Regulation of the storage, transportation, and handling of hazardous materials; use of hold-open latches at self-service gasoline stations; plans for bulk storage facilities.

(a) Some substances constitute a special hazard to property and to the life and safety of persons because of certain characteristics and properties incident to their storage, handling, and transportation. Substances presenting such a special hazard include gasoline, kerosene, and other flammable liquids; liquefied petroleum gases; welding and other gases; dry-cleaning fluids; anhydrous ammonia; and other gases, liquids, or solids of a highly flammable or hazardous nature.

(b) Every person who stores, transports, or handles any of the hazardous substances listed in subsection (a) of this Code section shall so store, transport, and handle the substances as to afford every precaution and protection as may be found by the Commissioner to be reasonable and practical to avoid injury to persons from exposure, fire,

or explosion caused by the storage, transportation, or handling of these substances, including transportation thereof only in vehicles which are in proper condition for that purpose.

(c) The Commissioner is directed to investigate the nature and properties of such hazardous substances and the known precautionary and protective techniques for their storage, transportation, and handling, including, but not limited to, the codes and standards adopted, recommended, or issued by the National Fire Protection Association and the Agricultural Nitrogen Institute. Based upon the investigation, the Commissioner is authorized to determine and by rule to provide what precautionary and protective techniques are reasonable and practical measures for the prevention of injury to persons and property from the storage, transportation, and handling of such highly flammable or hazardous substances. Such authorization shall include the power to provide, by rule, the minimum standards that a vehicle shall meet before it is considered to be in proper condition to transport the material. No person shall transport any such material or substance in bulk unless the vehicle in which it is transported is in the proper condition, as provided by such rules, to transport the material with reasonable safety.

(d)(1) As used in this subsection, the term:

(A) “Automatic-closing device” means a gasoline or diesel fuel pump nozzle which contains a valve which automatically shuts off the flow of gasoline or diesel fuel through the nozzle when the level of gasoline in a motor vehicle fuel tank reaches a certain level.

(B) “Hold-open latch” means a device which attaches to a gasoline or diesel fuel pump nozzle, which device mechanically holds the nozzle and valve in an open position.

(C) “Self-service station” means any place of business which sells gasoline or diesel fuel at retail and which allows customers to dispense the fuel.

(2) No self-service station shall be prohibited from installing and no customer at such station shall be prohibited from using hold-open latches on gasoline or diesel fuel pumps available for operation by the customer. However, if hold-open latches are used on pumps operated by the customer, such pumps shall be equipped with a functioning automatic-closing device.

(e) Plans and specifications for all proposed bulk storage facilities which come under classification in subsection (a) of this Code section shall be submitted to and receive approval by the state fire marshal and the proper local fire marshal before construction is started. All such

plans and specifications submitted as required by this subsection shall be accompanied by a \$100.00 fee for screening and shall bear the seal and Georgia registration number of the drafting architect or engineer or shall otherwise have the approval of the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 12; Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 3; Ga. L. 1968, p. 1084, § 1; Ga. L. 1983, p. 476, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 6.

Cross references.

Hazardous waste management generally, § 12-8-60 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Flammable and Combustible Liquids, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations for the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-11 et seq.

Rules and Regulations for the Storage and Handling of Anhydrous Ammonia, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-12 et seq.

Rules and Regulations for Welding Gases, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-13 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Provision of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-16(b) is not unreasonably vague. Safety Fire

Comm'r v. U.S.A. Gas, Inc., 229 Ga. App. 807, 494 S.E.2d 706.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Scheme of this Code section is to protect the public and it is contrary to public policy to allow the provisions of that section to be abrogated by agreement. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

Violation of regulation adopted by

Safety Fire Commissioner is a misdemeanor and punishable accordingly, or may be corrected in conformity with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 25-2-23 through 25-2-25). 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 103 et seq. 38 Am. Jur. 2d, Gas and Oil, §§ 131 et seq., 137 et seq. 57A Am. Jur. 2d, Negligence, § 350 et seq.

C.J.S.

65 C.J.S., Negligence, § 168 et seq. 66 C.J.S., Nuisances, §§ 63 et seq., 91.

ALR.

Validity of regulations as to manner of

handling or distributing gasoline, 58 A.L.R. 860.

Validity of regulations as to keeping or storage of gasoline, 128 A.L.R. 364.

Liability in connection with fire or explosion of explosives while being stored or transported, 35 A.L.R.3d 1177.

Gasoline or other fuel storage tanks as nuisance, 50 A.L.R.3d 209.

25-2-17. Regulation of explosives; licensure; required reporting.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “explosive” or “explosives”

means any chemical compound or mechanical mixture which is commonly used or intended for the purpose of producing an explosion, which compound or mixture contains any oxidizing and combustible units or other ingredients in such proportions, quantities, or packing that an ignition by fire, by friction, by concussion, by percussion, or by detonator of any part of the compound or mixture may cause such a sudden generation of highly heated gases that the resultant gaseous pressures are capable of producing destructive effects on contiguous objects or of destroying life or limb. Explosives constitute a special hazard to life and safety of persons because of the danger incident to their manufacture, transportation, use, sale, and storage.

(b) Every person who manufactures, transports, uses, sells, or stores explosives shall so manufacture, transport, use, sell, and store them as to afford every precaution and protection against injury to persons as the Commissioner may determine and by rule declare to be reasonable and practical; provided, however, that nothing contained in this Code section shall be construed to extend to storage, use, or sale of small arms ammunition.

(c) The Commissioner is directed to investigate and examine the nature and properties of various explosives and known safety and protective techniques, including the safety standards, recommendations, and codes of the National Fire Protection Association (Explosives Ordinance, National Fire Code), and the American Insurance Association, the successor to the National Board of Fire Underwriters. Based upon the investigation, the Commissioner is authorized to determine and by rule to provide what reasonable and practical protection must be afforded persons with respect to the manufacture, transportation, use, sale, and storage of explosives.

(d) No person shall manufacture, transport, use, sell, or store explosives without having first obtained a license therefor issued by the Commissioner in accordance with reasonable rules established by him. The Commissioner is authorized to make reasonable rules providing for the issuance of such licenses on an annual basis to those applicants who have observed and may be expected to observe safety rules lawfully made under this Code section. Graded fees for such licenses shall be as provided in Code Section 25-2-4.1. The permits for the use only of explosives may be issued by judges of the probate courts or other local elected officials whom the Commissioner may designate. Fees for such permits to use explosives shall be \$2.00 for each permit issued, which fee shall be retained by the issuing local official.

(e) Every person licensed under this Code section who suffers a larceny or attempted larceny of primer cord, blasting agents, powders, and dynamite shall make a report thereof to local law enforcement agencies and to the state fire marshal, in accordance with rules made by the Commissioner. The Commissioner is authorized to make such rules.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 13; Ga. L. 1967, p. 619, § 4; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 7; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2725, § 6.

Cross references.

Regulation of fireworks, § 25-10-1 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Explosives

and Blasting Agents, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-10-.01 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Civil Code 1910, §§ 1655, 2745, 2746 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Storing powder not nuisance per se. — Act of a powder company in main-

taining and storing powder upon one's land is not a nuisance per se. *Simpson v. DuPont Powder Co.*, 143 Ga. 465, 85 S.E. 344, 1915 Ga. LEXIS 485 (1915) (decided under former Civil Code 1910, §§ 1655, 2745, 2746).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 9 et seq. 51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits, §§ 6, 42 et seq.

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

10A Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms, Explosions and Explosives, § 2.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 1 et seq. 53 C.J.S., Licenses, §§ 7 et seq., 63 et seq.

ALR.

Liability for damages by explosives transported along highway, 44 A.L.R. 124.

Validity of regulations as to manner of handling or distributing gasoline, 58 A.L.R. 860.

Validity of regulations as to keeping or storage of gasoline, 128 A.L.R. 364.

Coverage of clause of fire policy insuring against explosion, 28 A.L.R.2d 995.

Liability in connection with fire or explosion of explosives while being stored or transported, 35 A.L.R.3d 1177.

25-2-18. Exemption of public buildings from fees or licenses; waiver for churches and charities.

All federal, state, county, or city publicly owned buildings covered by this chapter are exempt from any fee or license which may be specified in this chapter. Such fees or licenses may be waived where chargeable to churches and charitable organizations.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 31.

25-2-19. Regulation of fire hazards in hotels, apartment houses, department stores, warehouses, and public places.

The Commissioner shall promulgate reasonable rules and regulations governing and regulating fire hazards in hotels, apartment

houses, department stores, warehouses, storage places, and places of public assembly.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 17.

Cross references.

Operators of hotels, inns, and road-houses generally, § 43-21-1 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Authority at public race tracks. — Safety Fire Commissioner has authority to adopt rules and regulations which pertain to safety and protection of public at race tracks so long as there is a relation-

ship between the rules and regulations adopted and the duties and responsibilities entrusted to the Commissioner under the Safety Fire Commissioner Act. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-355.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 22 et seq.
35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 1 et seq.

ALR.

Liability of one starting bonfire for burning of child, 36 A.L.R. 297.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

25-2-20. Licensing of traveling carnivals, circuses, and other exhibits.

All traveling motion picture shows, carnivals, and circuses shall obtain a fire prevention regulatory license from the state fire marshal based upon compliance with this chapter, as set forth in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner. The fee for the license shall be \$150.00 for each calendar year or part thereof, payable to the state fire marshal, who shall pay the same into the state treasury.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 18; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-50.1/HB 1055.

Cross references.

Regulation of activities of carnivals,

road shows, tent shows, and other itinerant entertainment, § 43-1-15.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Carnival or circus must obtain fire prevention license, and that license is not required to be procured only when the licensee comprises a number or collection

of such shows, riding devices, booths, or concessions. 1952-53 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 378.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

27A Am. Jur. 2d, Entertainment and Sports Law, § 30 et seq.

C.J.S.

30A C.J.S., Entertainment and Amusement; Sports, § 33 et seq.

25-2-21. [Reserved] Investigation on complaint of dangerous building appurtenances; effect of failure to remove or repair after notice.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 19; repealed by Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 9, effective April 1, 1982.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 25/HB 79, reserved the designation of this Code section, effective April 24, 2013.

25-2-22. Right of Commissioner and other authorized officials to enter and inspect buildings and premises.

(a) The Commissioner and the various officials delegated by him to carry out this chapter shall have the authority at all times of the day and night to enter in or upon and to examine any building or premises where a fire is in progress or has occurred, as well as other buildings or premises adjacent to or near the same. The Commissioner and his delegated authorities shall have the right to enter in and upon all buildings and premises subject to this chapter, at any reasonable time, for the purpose of examination or inspection.

(b) Upon complaint submitted in writing, the Commissioner and the various officials to whom enforcement authority is delegated under this chapter may enter in or upon any building or premises between the hours of sunrise and sunset for the purpose of investigating the complaint. Upon the complaint of any person, the state fire marshal or his deputized officials may inspect or cause to be inspected all buildings and premises within their jurisdiction whenever he or they deem it necessary.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Construction of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-22. — In construing the words “a complaint submitted in writing” with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1051, § 20 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-22, in which they are contained, in its entirety and with the other sections (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-1 et seq.), it appears clear that the complaint would have to allege a

violation of one of those sections. 1963-65 Ga. Op. Att’y Gen. 349.

Authority of Commissioner to enter building. — Upon written complaint to the Commissioner, that a building is in violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-2-1 et seq., or of the rules of the Commissioner, the Commissioner has authority to enter the build-

ing between sunrise and sunset to investigate the complaint pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 25-2-22. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-4.

Commissioner has no duty to inspect certain abandoned buildings. —

Abandoned building, which is three stories or less in height, which does not otherwise fall within the list of buildings in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13 is not subject to inspection and licensing under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-12. The Commissioner therefore has no duty to inspect such a building. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-4.

Authority of the Commissioner to investigate potential fire hazards

upon written complaint under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-22(b) is not limited to the buildings and premises listed in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-13, nor otherwise limited as to type of building or premises. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. 90-4.

In order for a written complaint to provide a proper basis for an investigation by the Commissioner, the complaint should allege the existence of some fire hazard, and also must allege a violation of the rules and standards which have been established pursuant to the Commissioner’s rule-making authority. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 575 et seq.

ALR.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

Liability of owner or occupant of premises to building or construction inspector coming upon premises in discharge of duty, 28 A.L.R.3d 891.

Municipal liability for negligent fire inspection and subsequent enforcement, 69 A.L.R.4th 739.

25-2-22.1. Inspection warrants.

(a) The Commissioner, his delegate, or any other person authorized under this title to conduct inspections of property, in addition to other procedures now or hereafter provided, may obtain an inspection warrant under the conditions specified in this Code section. Such warrant shall authorize the Commissioner or his delegate or such authorized person to conduct a search or inspection of property either with or without the consent of the person whose property is to be searched or inspected if such search or inspection is one that is elsewhere authorized under this title or the rules and regulations duly promulgated hereunder.

(b) Inspection warrants may be issued by any judge of the superior, state, municipal, or magistrate court upon proper oath or affirmation showing probable cause for the purpose of conducting inspections authorized by this title or rules promulgated under this title and for the seizure of property or the taking of samples appropriate to the inspection. For the purposes of issuance of inspection warrants, probable cause exists upon showing a valid public interest in the effective enforcement of this title or rules promulgated under this title sufficient to justify inspection of the area, premise, building, or conveyance in the circumstances specified in the application for the warrant.

(c) A warrant shall be issued only upon affidavit of the Commissioner

or his designee or any person authorized to conduct inspections pursuant to this title, sworn to before the judicial officer and establishing the grounds for issuing the warrant. The issuing judge may issue the warrant when he is satisfied that the following conditions are met:

(1) The one seeking the warrant must establish under oath or affirmation that the property to be inspected is to be inspected as a part of a legally authorized program of inspection which includes that property or that there is probable cause for believing that there is a condition, object, activity, or circumstance which legally justifies such an inspection of that property; and

(2) The issuing judge determines that the issuance of the warrant is authorized by this Code section.

(d) The warrant shall:

(1) State the grounds for its issuance and the name of each person whose affidavit has been taken in support thereof;

(2) Be directed to persons authorized by this title to conduct inspections to execute it;

(3) Command the persons to whom it is directed to inspect the area, premise, building, or conveyance identified for the purpose specified and, if appropriate, direct the seizure of the property specified;

(4) Identify the item or types of property to be seized, if any; and

(5) Designate the judicial officer to whom it shall be returned.

(e) A warrant issued pursuant to this Code section must be executed and returned within ten days of its date of issuance unless, upon a showing of a need for additional time, the court orders otherwise. If property is seized pursuant to a warrant, a copy shall be provided upon request to the person from whom or from whose premises the property is taken, together with a receipt for the property taken. The return of the warrant shall be made promptly, accompanied by a written inventory of any property taken. A copy of the inventory shall be delivered upon request to the person from whom or from whose premises the property was taken and to the applicant for the warrant.

(f) The judicial officer who has issued a warrant shall attach thereto a copy of the return and all papers returnable in connection therewith and file them with the clerk of the superior court for the county in which the inspection was made.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-22.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1989, p. 815, § 1.

25-2-23. Issuance of notice to correct unsafe conditions.

When any of the officers listed in Code Section 25-2-22 finds any building or other structure which, for want of repair or by reason of age or dilapidated condition or any other cause is especially liable to fire hazard or which is so situated as to endanger other property or the safety of the public, or when, in or around any building, such officer finds combustible or explosive matter, inflammables, or other conditions dangerous to the safety of the building, notice may be given to the owner or agent and occupant of the building to correct such unsafe conditions as may be found.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Violation of regulations adopted by Safety Fire Commissioner is misdemeanor and punishable accordingly, or may be corrected in conformity

with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 25-2-23 through 25-2-25). 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 47 et seq.
58 Am. Jur. 2d, Nuisances, § 105 et seq.

C.J.S.

66 C.J.S., Nuisances, § 66. 73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 575 et seq.

ALR.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

25-2-24. Filing of petition for court order compelling compliance with notice.

If any owner, agent, or occupant fails to comply with the notice prescribed in Code Section 25-2-23 within the time specified in the notice, the state fire marshal or his delegated officials, with the approval of the Commissioner, may petition the court for a rule nisi to show cause why an order should not be issued by the court that the same be removed or remedied. Such court order shall forthwith be complied with by the owner or occupant of the premises or building within such time as may be fixed in the court order.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Purchase of junior fire marshal badges by state. — State may purchase

junior fire marshal badges for Comptroller General (now Commissioner of Insurance)

as promotion of fire prevention. 1962 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 444.

Use of state funds for purchase of fire safety messages. — For examples of messages containing fire safety message but also containing element of gratuity which outweighs educational value of message, thereby prohibiting state funds being used therefor, see 1962 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 445.

Violation of regulations adopted by Safety Fire Commissioner is misdemeanor and punishable accordingly, or may be corrected in conformity with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 25-2-23 through 25-2-25). 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 374. 13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 39. 42 Am. Jur. 2d, Injunctions, §§ 6, 148.

C.J.S.

73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 575 et seq.

ALR.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

25-2-25. Remedy of unsafe conditions by city or county upon failure to comply with court order.

If any person fails to comply with the order of the court made pursuant to Code Section 25-2-24 within the time fixed, the city or county in which the building or premises in question are located shall cause the building or premises to be forthwith repaired, torn down, or demolished, the hazardous materials removed, or the dangerous conditions remedied, as the case may be, at the expense of the city or county in which the property is situated. If the owner thereof, within 30 days after notice in writing of the amount of such expense, fails, neglects, or refuses to repay the city or county the expense thereby incurred, the local authorities shall issue a fi. fa. against the owner of the property for the expense actually incurred.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Violation of regulations adopted by Safety Fire Commissioner is misdemeanor and punishable accordingly, or may be corrected in conformity

with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 25-2-23 through 25-2-25). 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 374. 13 Am. Jur. 2d, Buildings, § 45 et seq. 42 Am. Jur. 2d, Injunction, § 6.

C.J.S.

66 C.J.S., Nuisances, §§ 25 et seq., 151. 73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 575 et seq.

ALR.

Power to require closing of place of amusement or other place of public assembly because of fire hazard or unsanitary conditions, 140 A.L.R. 1048.

25-2-26. Enforcement of Code Sections 25-2-22 through 25-2-25 by court order.

Code Sections 25-2-22 through 25-2-25 shall be construed so that the final authority for ordering the carrying out and enforcement of such Code sections shall be by order of the court and not by the Commissioner or his delegated authority.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

73A C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 575 et seq.

25-2-27. Suspected arson investigation — Authority to take testimony and arrest; obligation to furnish information to district attorney.

The state fire marshal or his deputy, when in his opinion such proceedings are necessary, shall take the testimony on oath of all persons believed to be cognizant of or to have information or knowledge in relation to suspected arson and shall cause the testimony to be reduced to writing. If he is of the opinion that there is evidence sufficient to charge any person with the crime of arson, he shall cause such person to be arrested in accordance with the law. He shall also furnish the district attorney of the circuit in which the fire occurred with all the information obtained by him in his investigation. The district attorney shall thereupon proceed according to law.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 21.

Cross references.

Arson and explosives generally, § 16-7-60 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Powers not exclusive. — Grant to the state fire marshal and the marshal's deputy of powers relating to investigation of suspected arson, as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-27, is not exclusive. 1989 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 89-14.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

5 Am. Jur. 2d, Arrest, §§ 1 et seq., 10 et seq., 31, 40. 5 Am. Jur. 2d, Arson and Related Offenses, § 31 et seq.

C.J.S.

6A C.J.S., Arson, § 21 et seq.

ALR.

Expert and opinion evidence as regards fire, 131 A.L.R. 1113.

What constitutes “burning” to justify charge of arson, 28 A.L.R.4th 482.

25-2-28. Suspected arson investigation — Power to subpoena witnesses and documents; administration of oaths; court order to compel compliance.

(a) The state fire marshal or the deputy state fire marshal shall have the power to summon and compel the attendance of witnesses before either or both of them, in any county in which the witness resides, to testify in relation to any matter which is designated by Code Section 25-2-27 as a subject of inquiry and to issue subpoenas to compel the production of all books, records, documents, and papers pertaining to such subject of inquiry. The state fire marshal and deputy state fire marshal may also administer oaths and affirmations to persons appearing as witnesses before them. Any person summoned shall have the right of counsel at the hearing if he desires.

(b) Should any person fail to comply with this Code section, the state fire marshal or his agent is authorized to procure an order from the superior court of the county in which the proposed witness resides, requiring compliance under the law.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 22.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 112 et seq. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 5.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Fires, § 18 et seq. 73A

C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, §§ 289, 303 et seq.

ALR.

Expert and opinion evidence as regards fire, 131 A.L.R. 1113.

25-2-29. Hearing procedure.

All hearings held by or under the direction of the Commissioner shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,” and the Commissioner may also satisfy the procedure for conduct of hearings on contested cases and rule making required under said chapter by following and complying with Chapter 2 of Title 33.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 23; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 298 et seq. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 5.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Fires, § 18 et seq. 73A

C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 277 et seq.

25-2-30. Duty of state fire marshal as to promotion of fire prevention and life safety generally.

It shall be the duty of the state fire marshal to contact individuals, associations, and state agencies, both within and outside this state, which have a direct interest in the fundamentals of fire prevention and life safety, for the purpose of promoting the objectives of this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 28.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Purchase of junior fire marshal badges by state. — State may purchase junior fire marshal badges for Comptroller General (now Commissioner of Insurance) as promotion of fire prevention. 1962 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 444.

Use of state funds for purchase of

fire safety messages. — For examples of messages containing fire safety message but also containing element of gratuity which outweighs educational value of message, thereby prohibiting state funds being used therefor, see 1962 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 445.

25-2-31. Dissemination of fire prevention information by state fire marshal; fire prevention education in schools.

(a) The state fire marshal may promote any plan or program which tends to disseminate information on fire prevention and similar projects and may aid any association or group of individuals which is primarily organized along such lines.

(b) It shall be the duty of the state fire marshal to carry on a state-wide program of fire prevention education in the schools of this state and to establish fire drills therein. All local school authorities are required to cooperate with the state fire marshal in carrying out programs designed to protect the lives of school children from fire and related hazards.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 26.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Expenditure involving expenses for conducting Junior Fire Marshal Camp is not an illegal expenditure, it being a constitutional and authorized educational expense authorized by Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 26 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-2-31). 1963-65 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 446.

25-2-32. Maintenance of records of fire losses; reports of losses by insurance companies; reports of fires.

(a) It shall be the duty of the state fire marshal to keep an up-to-date record of all fire losses, together with statistical data concerning the same. The various fire insurance companies doing business in this state shall submit to the Commissioner, quarterly, a report stating all the losses sustained by them, together with such pertinent data as may be required by the Commissioner.

(b) Effective January 1, 1993, all incidents of fires, whether accidental or incendiary, shall be reported to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner. Every fire department shall submit incident data either via a uniform electronic reporting method or on a uniform reporting form prescribed by the Commissioner and at intervals established by the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 25; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 9; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

Cross references.

Property insurance generally, § 33-32-1 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

43 Am. Jur. 2d, Insurance, § 1497.

25-2-32.1. Reports to Safety Fire Division of serious burn injuries.

Every case of a burn injury or wound where the victim sustained second-degree or third-degree burns to 5 percent or more of the body or any burns to the upper respiratory tract or laryngeal edema due to the inhalation of superheated air, and every case of a burn injury or wound which is likely to or may result in death, shall be reported at once to the Safety Fire Division of the office of the Commissioner of Insurance. The Safety Fire Division shall accept the report and notify the proper investigatory agency as may be appropriate. A written report shall be provided to the Safety Fire Division within 72 hours. The report shall be made by the physician attending or treating the case or by the manager, superintendent, or other person in charge whenever such case is treated in a hospital sanitarium, institution, or other medical facility.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-32.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1992, p. 2186, § 10.

25-2-32.2. Investigation of burn injuries reported pursuant to Code Section 25-2-32.1.

Every county or municipal governing authority or any two or more governing authorities or the Safety Fire Division are authorized and empowered to take such action as may be required to formulate task forces, teams, or fire or police investigative units to investigate any case of a burn injury or wound sustained as reported pursuant to Code Section 25-2-32.1, to ascertain the cause of fires or explosions of suspicious origin within the county or municipalities, to pursue necessary investigation thereof, and to assist in the preparation and prosecution of cases stemming from any alleged criminal activity attendant to such fires or explosions.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-32.2, enacted by Ga.
L. 1992, p. 2186, § 10.

25-2-33. Release of fire loss information by insurers on request by state or local official; immunity for furnishing of information; confidentiality of information received; testimony by officials in action against insurer.

(a) The state fire marshal, any deputy designated by the state fire marshal, the director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation or the chief of a fire department of any municipal corporation or county where a fire department is established may request any insurance company investigating a fire loss of real or personal property to release any information in its possession relative to that loss. The company shall release the information to and cooperate with any official authorized to request such information pursuant to this Code section. The information to be released shall include, but is not limited to:

(1) Any insurance policy relevant to the fire loss under investigation and any application for such a policy;

(2) Policy premium payment records on the policy, to the extent available;

(3) Any history of previous claims made by the insured for fire loss with the reporting carrier; and

(4) Material relating to the investigation of the loss, including statements of any person, proof of loss, and any other relevant evidence.

(b) If an insurance company has reason to suspect that a fire loss to

its insured's real or personal property was caused by incendiary means, the company shall notify the state fire marshal and furnish him with all relevant material acquired by the company during its investigation of the fire loss. The insurer shall also cooperate with and take such action as may be requested of it by the state fire marshal's office or by any law enforcement agency of competent jurisdiction. The company shall also permit any person to inspect its records pertaining to the policy and to the loss if the person is authorized to do so by law or by an appropriate order of a superior court of competent jurisdiction.

(c) In the absence of fraud or malice, no insurance company or person who furnishes information on its behalf shall be liable for damages in a civil action or subject to criminal prosecution for any oral or written statement made or any other action taken which is necessary to supply information required pursuant to this Code section.

(d) The officials and departmental and agency personnel receiving any information furnished pursuant to this Code section shall hold the information in confidence until such time as its release is required pursuant to a criminal or civil proceeding, provided that nothing contained in this Code section shall be deemed to prohibit representatives of the state fire marshal's office or other authorized law enforcement officials from discussing such matters with other agency or departmental personnel or with other law enforcement officials or from releasing or disclosing any such information during the conduct of their investigation, if the release or disclosure is necessary to enable them to conduct their investigation in an orderly and efficient manner; provided, further, that nothing contained in this Code section shall prohibit an insurance company which furnishes information to an authorized agency or agencies pursuant to this Code section from having the right to request relevant information and receive, within a reasonable time not to exceed 30 days, the information requested.

(e) Any official referred to in subsection (a) of this Code section may be required to testify as to any information in his possession regarding the fire loss of real or personal property in any civil action against an insurance company for the fire loss in which any person seeks recovery under a policy.

(f)(1) No person shall purposely refuse to release any information requested pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section.

(2) No person shall purposely refuse to notify the state fire marshal of a fire loss required to be reported pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section.

(3) No person shall purposely refuse to supply the state fire marshal with pertinent information required to be furnished pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section.

(4) No person shall purposely fail to hold in confidence information required to be held in confidence by subsection (d) of this Code section.

(g) Any person willfully violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1977, p. 1232, § 1; Ga. L. 1981, p. 825, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25; Ga. L. 2005, p. 599, § 7/SB 146.

Cross references.

Property insurance generally, § 33-32-1 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Restriction on persons entitled to request information. — In cases where the insurance company does not have reason to suspect incendiary causes, only those persons designated in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-33(a) may request release of fire loss information from an insurance company. 1989 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 89-14.

Requests from law enforcement agencies. — Any law enforcement agency of competent jurisdiction may request an insurance company to release fire loss information in cases when the insurance

company has reason to suspect that the fire loss was caused by incendiary means. 1989 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 89-14.

Scope of directive to cooperate with law enforcement agencies. — O.C.G.A. § 25-2-33(b) directive to insurance companies to cooperate with any law enforcement agency of competent jurisdiction includes such persons as sheriffs, county police, and other peace officers of proper jurisdiction. 1989 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 89-14.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

1 Am. Jur. 2d, Abstracts of Title, § 10 et seq. 18A Am. Jur. 2d, Corporations, §§ 285 et seq., 333 et seq. 66 Am. Jur. 2d, Records and Recording Laws, §§ 21, 25.

C.J.S.

46A C.J.S., Insurance, § 1813.

25-2-33.1. Reports of arson and suspected arson to state fire marshal and insurers; prohibition of payment of insurance claim upon receipt of report prior to notification.

(a) The fire department of each county and municipality and any other organized fire department operating within this state shall report every incident or suspected incident of arson to the local law enforcement agency, the state fire marshal, and every insurance company with a known pecuniary interest in the cause of the fire in which arson is involved or suspected to be involved. In any local jurisdiction where an organized fire department is not operating, the local law enforcement agency investigating a fire shall make the reports required by this Code section. Such reports shall be made on forms provided for that purpose by the state fire marshal.

(b) Any insurance company which has received a report of an incident or suspected incident of arson under subsection (a) of this Code section shall not pay any claim relating thereto prior to notifying in writing the state fire marshal and local fire department of the date the claim is to be paid.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-33.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1982, p. 792, § 1.

25-2-34. Cooperation with Commissioner by Department of Public Safety, Georgia State Patrol, and Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

The Department of Public Safety, the Georgia State Patrol, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation shall cooperate with the Commissioner and his deputies and inspectors whenever called upon by him or them in enforcing this chapter. They shall make available to the Commissioner or his deputies and inspectors such facilities as lie detectors, broadcasting facilities, and other aid and devices as requested.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 24.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law,
§ 113.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law
and Procedures, § 190 et seq.

25-2-35. Payment of reasonable fees for assistance in assembling evidence and apprehending suspects.

The Commissioner is authorized to pay sheriffs and other peace officers reasonable fees for assistance given in assembling evidence as to the causes or criminal origin of fires and in apprehending persons guilty of arson.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 24.

Cross references.

Criminal offenses involving arson and
explosives, § 16-7-60 et seq.

25-2-36. Civil remedies for violations of chapter and rules, regulations, or orders of Commissioner.

In addition to the civil monetary penalty provided for in Code Section 25-2-37, the Commissioner may bring a civil action to enjoin a violation of any provision of this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter. In particular, but not by way

of limitation upon the authority granted in this Code section, the Commissioner may bring an action to enjoin any construction found to be in contravention of Code Section 25-2-13 or 25-2-14 or to obtain an order of court directing the immediate evacuation and the secure closure of any structure which, by reason of violation of any provision of this chapter or of any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter, is found to pose an immediate threat to the property, health, or lives of the occupants of the structure. In order to avail himself of the remedies provided for in this Code section, it shall not be necessary for the Commissioner to allege or to prove the absence of an adequate remedy at law.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 894, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

36 Am. Jur. 2d, Forfeitures and Penalties, § 61 et seq. 73 Am. Jur. 2d, Statutes, § 185 et seq.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 1 et seq.

25-2-37. Locking exit doors; construction of building without approval of plans; civil penalties for violation of chapter or rules.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to lock an exit door whether or not it is a required exit unless such provisions are allowed by this chapter or by any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to begin construction on any proposed building or structure which comes under the classification in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 and which comes under the jurisdiction of the office of the Commissioner of Insurance pursuant to Code Section 25-2-12 without first having plans approved in accordance with Code Section 25-2-14.

(c) Any person who violates this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Commissioner in accordance with the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner.

(d) Any person who violates this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$1,000.00 for each day that the violation persists after such person is notified of the Commissioner's intent to impose such penalty and of the right to a hearing with respect to same.

(e) Any person violating subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this Code section

shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000.00 for a first offense, not less than \$1,000.00 and not more than \$2,000.00 for a second offense, and not less than \$2,000.00 and not more than \$5,000.00 for a third or subsequent offense.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 894, § 2; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 11.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

36 Am. Jur. 2d, Forfeitures and Penalties, § 61 et seq. 73 Am. Jur. 2d, Statutes, § 194 et seq.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 1 et seq.

ALR.

Recovery of cumulative statutory penalties, 71 A.L.R.2d 986.

25-2-38. Criminal penalties for violations of chapter and rules, regulations, or orders of Commissioner.

Any person, firm, or corporation violating this chapter or failing or refusing to comply with any regulation promulgated under this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 32.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Violation of regulations adopted by Safety Fire Commissioner is misdemeanor and punishable accordingly, or may be corrected in conformity

with Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 20 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 25-2-23 through 25-2-25). 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-147.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

36 Am. Jur. 2d, Forfeitures and Penalties, § 61 et seq. 73 Am. Jur. 2d, Statutes, § 185 et seq.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 1 et seq.

25-2-38.1. Sovereign immunity of state not waived; legal duty of property owner or lessee not relieved.

(a) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to constitute a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the state, or any officer or employee thereof, in carrying out the provisions of this chapter. No action shall be maintained against the state, any municipality, county, or any officer, elected officer or employees thereof, for damages sustained as a result

of any fire or related hazard covered in this chapter by reason of any inspection or other action taken or not taken pursuant to this chapter.

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to relieve any property owner or lessee thereof from any legal duty, obligation, or liability incident to the ownership, maintenance, or use of such property.

History.

Ga. L. 1981, p. 1779, § 9.

Cross references.

Nonliability of counties in absence of statute, § 36-1-4.

Liability of municipal corporations for acts or omissions of officers, § 36-33-1 et seq.

Immunity of state and political subdivi-

sions for emergency management activities, § 38-3-35.

Immunity of officers, members, and others of county and municipal fire departments from liability for acts performed while fighting fires or for acts performed at scenes of emergency, §§ 51-1-29 through 51-1-30.4.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Application to city inspector performing a power reconnect inspection. — Neither O.C.G.A. § 8-2-222 nor O.C.G.A. § 25-2-38.1 operated to relieve a city inspector from liability for failure to properly inspect a mobile home prior to authorizing the connection of electrical power to the home because there was no evidence that the inspector conducted an

inspection of the mobile home pursuant to the Uniform Act for the Application of Building and Fire Related Codes to Existing Buildings or the Minimum Fire Safety Standards Code. *Vann v. Finley*, 313 Ga. App. 153, 721 S.E.2d 156, 2011 Ga. App. LEXIS 1080 (2011), cert. dismissed, No. S12C0667, 2012 Ga. LEXIS 387 (Ga. App. 24, 2012).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Municipal liability for negligent fire in-

spection and subsequent enforcement, 69 A.L.R.4th 739.

25-2-39. Construction of chapter.

It is declared that this chapter is necessary for the public safety, health, peace, and welfare, is remedial in nature, and shall be construed liberally.

History.

Ga. L. 1949, p. 1057, § 30.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

73 Am. Jur. 2d, Statutes, §§ 7, 58 et seq., 170 et seq.

C.J.S.

82 C.J.S., Statutes, § 346 et seq.

25-2-40. Smoke detectors required in new dwellings and dwelling units; exceptions.

(a)(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (f) of this Code section, on and after July 1, 1987, every new dwelling and every new dwelling unit within an apartment, house, condominium, and townhouse and every motel, hotel, and dormitory shall be provided with an approved listed smoke detector installed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and listing.

(2) On and after July 1, 1994, every dwelling and every dwelling unit within an apartment, house, condominium, and townhouse and every motel, hotel, and dormitory which was constructed prior to July 1, 1987, shall have installed an approved battery operated smoke detector which shall be maintained in good working order unless any such building is otherwise required to have a smoke detector system pursuant to Code Section 25-2-13.

(3) On and after July 1, 2001, every patient sleeping room of every nursing home shall be provided with no less than an approved listed battery operated single station smoke detector installed in accordance with their listing. Such detectors shall be maintained in good working order by the operator of such nursing home. This paragraph shall not apply to nursing homes equipped with automatic sprinkler systems.

(b) In dwellings, dwelling units, and other facilities listed in subsection (a) of this Code section, a smoke detector shall be mounted on the ceiling or wall at a point centrally located in the corridor or area giving access to each group of rooms used for sleeping purposes. Where the dwelling or dwelling unit contains more than one story, detectors are required on each story including cellars and basements, but not including uninhabitable attics; provided, however, that hotels and motels which are protected throughout by an approved supervised automatic sprinkler system installed in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Commissioner shall be exempt from the requirement to install smoke detectors in interior corridors but shall be subject to all other applicable requirements imposed under Code Section 25-2-13.

(c) In dwellings, dwelling units, and other facilities listed in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of this Code section with split levels, a smoke detector need be installed only on the upper level, provided the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level, except that if there is a door between levels then a detector is required on each level. Such detectors shall be connected to a sounding device or other detector to provide an alarm which will be audible in the sleeping areas.

(d) Detectors shall be listed and meet the installation requirements of NFPA 72. In addition, a one and one-half hour emergency power

supply source is required on all detection systems required by this chapter and permitted after April 1, 1992, except where battery operated smoke detectors are allowed.

(e) Any complete automatic fire alarm system using automatic smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with NFPA 72.

(f)(1) The provisions of this Code section may be enforced by local building and fire code officials in the case of residential buildings which are not covered by Code Section 25-2-13; provided, however, that this Code section shall not establish a special duty on said officials to inspect such residential facilities for compliance with this Code section; provided, further, that inspections shall not be conducted for the purpose of determining compliance with this Code section absent reasonable cause to suspect other building or fire code violations. The jurisdiction enforcing this Code section shall retain any fines collected pursuant to this subsection.

(2) Any occupant who fails to maintain a smoke detector in a dwelling, dwelling unit, or other facility, other than a nursing home, listed in subsection (a) of this Code section in good working order as required in this Code section shall be subject to a maximum fine of \$25.00, provided that a warning shall be issued for a first violation.

(3) Any operator of a nursing home who fails to install and maintain the smoke detectors required under paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be sanctioned in accordance with Code Section 31-2-8.

(g) Failure to maintain a smoke detector in good working order in a dwelling, dwelling unit, or other facility listed in subsection (a) of this Code section in violation of this Code section shall not be considered evidence of negligence, shall not be considered by the court on any question of liability of any person, corporation, or insurer, shall not be any basis for cancellation of coverage or increase in insurance rates, and shall not diminish any recovery for damages arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or occupancy of such dwelling, dwelling unit, or other facility listed in subsection (a) of this Code section.

(h) The Safety Fire Commissioner is authorized and encouraged to inform the public through public service announcements of the availability of a limited number of battery operated smoke detectors which may be obtained by persons in need without charge from the office of Safety Fire Commissioner or local fire departments.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-40, enacted by Ga. L. 1987, p. 989, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 2186, § 12; Ga. L. 1994, p. 1235, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 860, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453,

§ 1-9/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 4-7/HB 214; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1995, "Commissioner" was substituted for

“commissioner” in subsection (b); and “battery operated” was substituted for “battery-operated” in subsections (d) and (h).

Law reviews.

For annual survey article on real property law, see 52 Mercer L. Rev. 383 (2000).

For annual survey of local government law, see 56 Mercer L. Rev. 351 (2004).

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Failure to maintain smoke detectors. — Evidence of a landlord’s failure to maintain battery operated smoke detectors was not admissible in a civil case. *Wadkins v. Smallwood*, 243 Ga. App. 134, 530 S.E.2d 498, 2000 Ga. App. LEXIS 275 (2000), cert. denied, No. S00C1315, 2000 Ga. LEXIS 710 (Ga. Sept. 29, 2000).

Summary judgment was properly entered for a landlord and a property manager (appellees) in a negligence suit filed by an injured party as appellees complied with state law as to the installation of smoke detectors contained in O.C.G.A. § 25-2-40(a)(2), and as evidence of any failure to maintain the detectors was inadmissible under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-40(g); as § 25-2-40(a)(2) was more specific, it governed over any conflicting statutory or common law duty of care, such as those contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 44-7-13 and 51-

3-1, and as § 25-2-40(g) was enacted more recently than the older statutes, it controlled. *Hill v. Tschannen*, 264 Ga. App. 288, 590 S.E.2d 133, 2003 Ga. App. LEXIS 1151 (2003), cert. denied, No. S04C0616, 2004 Ga. LEXIS 246 (Ga. Mar. 8, 2004), cert. denied, No. S04C0617, 2004 Ga. LEXIS 245 (Ga. Mar. 8, 2004).

Since the jury was not required to believe testimony that a property owner had installed smoke detectors in the owner’s rental property, and other testimony authorized the jury’s finding that the owner breached the duty under O.C.G.A. § 25-2-40 to install smoke detectors, O.C.G.A. § 44-7-14 did not insulate the owner from liability for the wrongful death of tenants in a fire. *Gordon v. Fleeman*, 298 Ga. App. 662, 680 S.E.2d 684, 2009 Ga. App. LEXIS 769 (2009).

25-2-41. Use of class B fire-fighting foam containing intentionally added PFAS chemicals.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “Class B fire-fighting foam” means any foam designed to extinguish flammable liquid fires.

(2) “PFAS chemicals” means a class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom, including perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, and designed to be fully functional in class B fire-fighting foam formulations.

(3) “Testing” means calibration testing, conformance testing, or fixed system testing.

(b) On and after January 1, 2020, no person; fire department provided for under Chapter 3 of this title; state department, agency, board, bureau, office, commission, public corporation, or authority; county, municipal corporation, school district, or other political subdivision of this state shall discharge or otherwise use class B fire-fighting foam that contains intentionally added PFAS chemicals unless:

(1) Such discharge or other use occurs in fire prevention or in response to an emergency fire-fighting operation; or

(2) Such discharge or other use is for training or testing purposes which occurs at a facility that has implemented containment, treatment, and disposal measures to prevent uncontrolled releases of such class B fire-fighting foam into the environment.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to:

(1) Restrict the manufacture, sale, or distribution of class B fire-fighting foam that contains intentionally added PFAS chemicals or restrict the discharge or other use of class B fire-fighting foam in response to an emergency fire-fighting operation; or

(2) Prevent the use of nonfluorinated foams, including other class B fire-fighting foams, for purposes of training for fire-fighting operations.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-2-41, enacted by Ga. L. 2019, p. 718, § 1/HB 458.

CHAPTER 3

LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS GENERALLY

Article 1		Article 2	
General Provisions		Minimum Requirements	
Sec.		Sec.	
25-3-1.	General powers of fire departments.	25-3-20.	Legislative intent.
25-3-2.	Powers of fire departments in event of emergencies generally.	25-3-21.	Definitions.
25-3-3.	Provision of assistance to respond to emergencies, disasters, or hazardous materials.	25-3-22.	Notification and documentation that organization meets requirements; issuance of certificate of compliance.
25-3-4.	Authority of counties, municipalities, or other political subdivisions to enact ordinances, regulations, or codes.	25-3-23.	General requirements; equipment and clothing; insurance.
25-3-5.	Operation of other fire departments within municipalities or counties.	25-3-24.	Authority of executive director to determine compliance.
25-3-6.	Effect of article on powers and duties of other officials and departments.	25-3-25.	Suspension or revocation of certificate of compliance; hearing by aggrieved departments; enforcement of suspensions or revocations.
		25-3-26.	Duty of executive director to cooperate with fire departments.
		25-3-27.	Construction of article.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR. Municipal liability for negligent fire inspection and subsequent enforcement, 69 A.L.R.4th 739.

ARTICLE 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Cross references. existing Code sections of this chapter (§§ 25-3-1 through 25-3-6) as Article 1 of the chapter.

Deputizing of local fire marshals as state officers, § 25-2-12.1.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 2 designated the

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 1 et seq.

25-3-1. General powers of fire departments.

Any fire department of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision and any chartered fire department shall have the authority to:

- (1) Protect life and property against fire, explosions, hazardous materials, or electrical hazards;
- (2) Detect and prevent arson;
- (3) Administer and enforce the laws of this state; the rules and regulations adopted by the departments, boards, bureaus, commissions, and agencies of this state; and any ordinances, rules, regulations, or codes adopted by the county, municipality, or other political subdivision of this state that are related to the prevention and suppression of fires, explosions, or injuries from hazardous materials and explosions and the protection of life and property from such hazards;
- (4) Conduct programs of public education in fire prevention and safety;
- (5) Conduct emergency medical services and rescue assistance, subject to Chapter 11 of Title 31 and subject to the approval of the county, municipality, or other political subdivision;
- (6) Control and regulate the flow of traffic in areas of existing emergencies, including rail, highway, water, and air traffic; and
- (7) Perform all such services of a fire department as may be provided by law or which necessarily appertain thereto.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 1.

25-3-2. Powers of fire departments in event of emergencies generally.

In the event of any fire, explosion, bomb threat, or similar emergency, the fire department in any county, municipality, or other political subdivision shall be authorized to:

- (1) Enter any property, building, structure, vehicle, watercraft, aircraft, railroad car, or other place for the purpose of fighting the fire, explosion, or similar hazardous conditions or searching for a bomb or enter any such place which is, in the opinion of the chief officer of the fire department or his designee, endangered by fire, explosion, bomb threat, or similar hazardous conditions;
- (2) Cut any wires, electrical or otherwise, or turn off any utility, as deemed necessary to preserve life or property;

(3) Prevent the blocking of any public or private street, road or alley, way or driveway, or emergency lane during any such emergency and remove any vehicles or other obstructions necessary;

(4) Confiscate supplies, chemicals, or equipment necessary for such emergency;

(5) Make any necessary tests; and

(6) Evacuate any building or area necessary.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 2; Ga. L. 1983, p. 3, § 18; Ga. L. 1989, p. 271, § 1.

ments for acts performed while fighting fires or for acts performed at scenes of emergencies, § 51-1-30.

Cross references.

Liability of members of fire depart-

25-3-3. Provision of assistance to respond to emergencies, disasters, or hazardous materials.

Any fire department may provide assistance to any agency or officer of the United States government, of this state, or of any political subdivision or authority thereof as may be needed to respond to any emergency or disaster, including, but not limited to, floods, sabotage, civil disturbance, fire, earthquake, wind, storm, wave action, oil spill or other water contamination, epidemic, air contamination, blight, drought, infestation, explosion, riot, or energy emergency, as defined by Chapter 3 of Title 38, or to respond to hazardous materials.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 4; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(a)(1)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

ize, and correct the Code, deleted “as defined by Article 7 of Chapter 5 of Title 32” at the end of this Code section.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

25-3-4. Authority of counties, municipalities, or other political subdivisions to enact ordinances, regulations, or codes.

The governing body of each county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state shall have the power to enact such ordinances, regulations, or fire and life safety codes as may be necessary to carry out this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 3; Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fire ordinances for day care centers. — Authority of local governments to

enact fire ordinances for day care centers was preempted by former O.C.G.A. § 49-

5-14 [repealed], which gave the Board of Human Resources (now Board of Human Services) authority to adopt fire safety codes for day care centers. 1984 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 84-9.

25-3-5. Operation of other fire departments within municipalities or counties.

Nothing within this article shall be construed so as to permit a county or other fire department to operate within the limits of a municipality except by written or oral contract with the municipality. Nothing within this article shall be construed so as to permit a municipal fire department to operate in the unincorporated area of a county except by written or oral contract with the county.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 5; Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 1.

25-3-6. Effect of article on powers and duties of other officials and departments.

This article shall not affect the duties, powers, or responsibilities of the Safety Fire Commissioner, the state fire marshal, the sheriff's office, the Department of Public Safety, local law enforcement agencies, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Natural Resources, the State Forestry Commission, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Defense, or the Department of Public Health.

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1395, § 6; Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 1; Ga. L. 1994, p. 1758, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214; Ga. L. 2012, p. 775, § 25/HB 942.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fire ordinances for day care centers. — The authority of local governments to enact fire ordinances for day care centers was preempted by former O.C.G.A. § 49-5-14 [repealed], which gave

the Board of Human Resources (now Board of Human Services) authority to adopt fire safety codes for day care centers. 1984 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 84-9.

ARTICLE 2

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

25-3-20. Legislative intent.

It is the intention of the General Assembly of Georgia to establish minimum requirements for all fire departments operating in this state. The General Assembly recognizes that fire departments operating in

this state cannot function effectively and efficiently as full-time fire departments without meeting or exceeding the minimum requirements established by this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 3.

25-3-21. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Executive director” means the executive director of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council.

(2)(A) “Fire department” means any fire department which is authorized to exercise the general and emergency powers enumerated in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2.

(B) “Fire department” also means any department, agency, organization, or company operating in this state with the intent and purpose of carrying out the duties, functions, powers, and responsibilities normally associated with a fire department. These duties, functions, powers, and responsibilities include but are not limited to the protection of life and property against fire, explosions, or other hazards.

(3) “Firefighter” means any able-bodied person at least 18 years of age who has been duly appointed by a legally constituted fire department and who has the responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires, protecting life and property, and performing other duties enumerated in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-21, enacted by Ga. L.

1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1493, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Volunteer fire department. — Volunteer fire department is a “fire department” within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 25-3-21 and must therefore comply with the minimum requirements established for the operation of fire departments pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 25-3-20 et seq. 1986 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 86-8.

Use of inmates in fire departments. — Inmate firefighters should be considered volunteer firefighters as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-4-2 and not a separate cat-

egory. The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council has the authority to set minimum requirements for volunteer firefighters, the category to which inmates belong, serving as firefighters on fire departments as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-3-21 and to establish and modify by rule and regulation minimum requirements for such fire departments generally, regardless of whether the departments are staffed solely or partially with inmate firefighters. 2012 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 12-4.

25-3-22. Notification and documentation that organization meets requirements; issuance of certificate of compliance.

(a) In order for a fire department employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters to be legally organized to operate in the State of Georgia, the chief administrative officer of the fire department shall notify and submit all required documentation to the executive director that demonstrates that the organization meets the minimum requirements specified in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council to function as a fire department. If the executive director is satisfied that the fire department meets the minimum requirements contained in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, he or she shall recommend to the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council that a certificate of compliance be issued by the council to the fire department. If the council issues such certificate of compliance, the fire department shall be authorized to exercise the general and emergency powers set forth in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2.

(b) In order for a volunteer fire department to be legally organized to operate in the State of Georgia, the chief administrative officer of the fire department shall notify and submit all required documentation to the executive director that demonstrates that the organization meets the minimum requirements specified in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council to function as a volunteer fire department. If the executive director is satisfied that the volunteer fire department meets the minimum requirements contained in Code Section 25-3-23 and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, he or she shall recommend to the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council that a certificate of compliance be issued by such council to the volunteer fire department. If the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council issues such certificate of compliance, the fire department shall be authorized to exercise the general and emergency powers set forth in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-22, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 2; Ga. L. 1998, p. 560, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 1; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 1/HB 727; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 1/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, designated the existing pro-

visions as subsection (a); inserted “employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters” in the first sentence of subsection (a); and added subsection (b).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

25-3-23. General requirements; equipment and clothing; insurance.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this Code section, in order to be legally organized:

(1) A fire department shall comply with the following requirements:

(A) Be established to provide fire and other emergency and nonemergency services in accordance with standards specified by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, and the applicable local government;

(B) Be capable of providing fire protection 24 hours a day, 365 days per year;

(C) Be responsible for a defined area of operations depicted on a map located at the fire station, which area of operations shall have been approved and designated by the governing authority of the applicable county, municipality, or other political subdivision in the case of any county, municipal, or volunteer fire department; and

(D) Be staffed with a sufficient number of full-time, part-time, or volunteer firefighters who have successfully completed basic firefighter training as specified by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters; and

(2) A fire department shall possess the following items of approved equipment and protective clothing:

(A) A minimum of one fully equipped, operable pumper with a capacity of at least 750 GPM at 150 PSI and a tank capacity of a minimum of 250 gallons; provided, however, that previously approved fire apparatus which does not meet such minimum standards may be used in lieu of the minimum required pumper until replaced by the local authority;

(B) A minimum of equipment, appliances, adapters, and accessories necessary to perform and carry out the duties and responsibilities of a fire department set forth in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2 as approved by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time fire-

fighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters;

(C) A minimum of two approved self-contained breathing apparatus for each pumping apparatus as approved by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters; and

(D) A minimum issue of sufficient personal protective clothing to permit each member to perform safely the duties of a firefighter.

(b)(1) A legally organized fire department shall provide and maintain sufficient insurance coverage on each member of the fire department to pay claims for injuries sustained en route to, during, and returning from fire calls or other emergencies and disasters and scheduled training sessions.

(2)(A) As used in this paragraph, the term:

(i) "Cancer" means bladder, blood, brain, breast, cervical, esophageal, intestinal, kidney, lymphatic, lung, prostate, rectum, respiratory tract, skin, testicular, and thyroid cancer; leukemia; multiple myeloma; or non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

(ii) "Firefighter" means a firefighter as defined in Code Section 25-4-2.

(iii) "Volunteer" means a volunteer as defined in Code Section 25-4-2.

(B) On and after January 1, 2018, a legally organized fire department shall provide and maintain sufficient insurance coverage on each member of the fire department who is a firefighter to pay claims for cancer diagnosed after having served 12 consecutive months as a firefighter with such fire department. Such insurance benefits shall include at minimum the following:

(i)(I) A lump sum benefit of \$25,000.00 subject to limitations specified in the insurance contract and based on severity of cancer and payable to such firefighter upon submission to the insurance carrier or other payor of acceptable proof of diagnosis by a physician board certified in the medical specialty appropriate for the type of cancer involved that there are one or more malignant tumors characterized by the uncontrollable and abnormal growth and spread of malignant cells with invasion of normal tissue and that:

(a) Surgery, radiotherapy, or chemotherapy is medically necessary;

(b) There is metastasis; or

(c) The firefighter has terminal cancer, is expected to die within 24 months or less from the date of diagnosis, and will not benefit from, or has exhausted, curative therapy; or

(II) A lump sum benefit of \$6,250.00 subject to limitations specified in the insurance contract and based on severity of cancer and payable to such firefighter upon submission to the insurance carrier or other payor of acceptable proof of diagnosis by a physician board certified in the medical specialty appropriate for the type of cancer involved that:

(a) There is carcinoma in situ such that surgery, radiotherapy, or chemotherapy has been determined to be medically necessary;

(b) There are malignant tumors which are treated by endoscopic procedures alone;

(c) There are malignant melanomas; or

(d) There is a tumor of the prostate, provided that it is treated with radical prostatectomy or external beam therapy; and

(ii) Payable as a result of a specific injury or illness to begin six months after disability and submission to the insurance carrier or other payor of acceptable proof of disability precluding service as a firefighter and continuing for up to 36 consecutive monthly payments:

(I) A monthly benefit equal to 60 percent of the member's monthly salary as an employed firefighter with the fire department or a monthly benefit of \$5,000.00, whichever is less; or

(II) If the member is a volunteer, a monthly benefit of \$1,500.00.

The benefit under subdivision (I) or (II) of this division, as applicable, shall be subordinate to any other benefit actually paid to the firefighter for such disability from any other source, not including insurance purchased solely by the firefighter, and shall be limited to the difference between the amount of such other paid benefit and the amount specified under subdivision (I) or (II) of this division, as applicable.

(C) The combined total of all benefits received by any firefighter under subdivisions (B)(i)(I) and (B)(i)(II) of this paragraph during his or her lifetime shall not exceed \$50,000.00.

(D) With the exception of the benefit under subdivision (B)(ii)(I) of this paragraph, any person who was simultaneously a member of more than one fire department at the time of diagnosis shall not be entitled to receive benefits under this paragraph from or on behalf of more than one of such fire departments. In the event a volunteer of one fire department is simultaneously employed by another fire department, the fire department for which such person is a volunteer shall not be required to maintain the coverage on such volunteer otherwise required under this subsection during the period of such employment. Any member who receives benefits under division (ii) of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph may be required to have his or her condition reevaluated; in the event any such reevaluation reveals that such person has regained the ability to perform duties as a firefighter, then his or her benefits under division (ii) of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph shall cease. Benefits under said division shall also cease upon the death of such person. A member who, after at least one year as a firefighter, departs from employment, ceases to be an active volunteer, or retires shall be entitled to continue his or her coverages under this paragraph through a continuation or conversion to individual coverage. The departing member shall be responsible for payment of all premiums.

(E) In addition to any other purpose authorized under Chapter 8 of Title 33, county governing authorities and municipal governing authorities may use proceeds from county and municipal taxes imposed under said chapter for purposes of providing insurance pursuant to this paragraph.

(F) Funds received as premiums for the coverages specified in this paragraph shall not be subject to premium taxes under Chapter 8 of Title 33.

(G) The computation of premium amounts by an insurer for the coverages under this paragraph shall be subject to generally accepted adjustments from insurance underwriting.

(c)(1) The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council shall be authorized to adopt such rules and regulations for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters as are reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section and to establish and modify minimum requirements for all fire departments operating in this state, provided that such requirements are equal to or exceed the requirements provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section.

(2) The Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council shall be authorized to adopt such rules and regulations for fire departments solely

utilizing volunteer firefighters as are reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section and to establish and modify minimum requirements for all volunteer fire departments operating in this state, provided that such requirements are equal to or exceed the requirements provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-23, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 25; Ga. L. 1990, p. 354, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 3; Ga. L. 1998, p. 560, § 2; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 2; Ga. L. 2005, p. 60, § 25/HB 95; Ga. L. 2017, p. 336, § 1/HB 146; Ga. L. 2018, p. 1112, § 25/SB 365; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 2/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, in subparagraph (a)(1)(A), deleted “solely” following “specified” and inserted “, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire

Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters,”; inserted “, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters” in subparagraphs (a)(1)(D), (a)(2)(B), and (a)(2)(C); designated the existing provisions of subsection (c) as paragraph (c)(1); inserted “for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters” in paragraph (c)(1); and added paragraph (c)(2).

25-3-24. Authority of executive director to determine compliance.

The executive director may consult with and consider the recommendations of the director of the State Forestry Commission, the director of the Georgia Fire Academy, the state fire marshal, and the governing authority of any county or municipality in which the fire department is located to determine if individual fire departments are complying with the minimum provisions of this article and serving the best interests of the citizens of the area of its operations.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-24, enacted by Ga. L.

1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 4; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

25-3-25. Suspension or revocation of certificate of compliance; hearing by aggrieved departments; enforcement of suspensions or revocations.

(a) The certificate of compliance issued by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council shall be subject to suspension or revocation by the applicable council at any time it receives satisfactory evidence that the fire department is not maintaining sufficient personnel, equipment, or insurance required by Code Section 25-3-23, or the rules and regulations of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments

solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 25-3-23.

(b) The chief administrative officer of any fire department aggrieved by a decision of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, under subsection (a) of this Code section may, within 30 days of the date of such decision, request a hearing on the matter before the applicable council. Following a hearing before the applicable council, the chief administrative officer of the fire department affected shall be served with a written decision of the applicable council announcing whether the certificate of compliance shall remain revoked or suspended or whether it shall be reinstated.

(c) The Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, shall not suspend or revoke any certificate of compliance for failure to meet firefighter training requirements when such failure was due to unavailability of required training from or through the Georgia Fire Academy.

(d) The Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters, may refer suspensions or revocations to the Attorney General for enforcement. Upon referral from a council, the Attorney General may bring a civil action to enjoin any organization which is not in compliance with the applicable requirements of this chapter from performing any or all firefighting functions until such requirements are met by such organization.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-3-25, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 5; Ga. L. 1998, p. 560, § 3; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 3; Ga. L. 2005, p. 60, § 25/HB 95; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 3/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, in subsection (a), substituted “Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council” for “council”, inserted “applicable”, and inserted “, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters,”; in subsection (b), substituted “Georgia Firefighter Standards and

Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters,” for “council” and inserted “applicable” three times; substituted “Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council, for fire departments employing full-time firefighters or part-time firefighters, or the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council, for fire departments solely utilizing volunteer firefighters,” for “council” in subsections (c) and (d); and substituted “a council” for “the council” in the second sentence of subsection (d).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 3/SB 342, which

amended this Code section, purported to amend Code Section 24-3-25 but actually amended Code Section 25-3-25.

25-3-26. Duty of executive director to cooperate with fire departments.

The executive director shall cooperate with newly formed and existing fire departments to ensure that all fire departments in this state are in compliance with the provisions of this article by July 1, 1986.

History. 1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, Code 1981, § 25-3-26, enacted by Ga. L. § 25; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 6.

25-3-27. Construction of article.

This article shall not be construed to amend, modify, or repeal any of the provisions of Chapter 4 of this title, known as the “Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Act,” nor shall this article be construed to restrict the requirements of any other provisions relating to fire departments, equipment, or personnel.

History. Code 1981, § 25-3-27, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1000, § 3; Ga. L. 1992, p. 6, § 25.

CHAPTER 4

FIREFIGHTER STANDARDS AND TRAINING

Sec.		Sec.	
25-4-1.	Short title.		council and volunteer council.
25-4-2.	Definitions.		
25-4-3.	Establishment of Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council.	25-4-7.1.	Appointment of executive director; employment of other personnel.
25-4-3.1.	Establishment of Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council.	25-4-8.	Qualifications of firefighters generally.
25-4-4.	Eligibility of council and volunteer council members for public office.	25-4-8.1.	Qualifications for volunteer firefighters.
25-4-5.	Administrative assignment to Department of Public Safety; source of funds; authority to accept gifts and other items of value.	25-4-9.	Basic firefighter training course; transfer of certification.
25-4-6.	Meetings, quorum, and annual reporting of council and volunteer council.	25-4-10.	Mandatory training.
25-4-7.	Functions and powers of	25-4-11.	Adoption of higher training requirements by employing agencies.
		25-4-11.1.	Random testing for illegal drug usage by qualified firefighters.
		25-4-12.	Applicability of chapter.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1242, §§ 1 and 2, as enacted, purported to amend the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Act (Ga. L. 1971, p. 693) which was codified as Article 1 of this chapter. However, since it has been determined that the 1980 Act, which dealt with airport firefighters, was intended to be a new Act rather than an amendment to the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Act, the 1980 Act was codified as Article 2 of this chapter, which was repealed by Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 4/SB 308, effective July 1, 2005.

Former Article 2, concerning airport firefighters, consisted of Code Sections 25-4-30 and 25-4-31, and was based on Ga. L. 1980, p. 1242, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1493, § 5; Ga. L. 1995, p. 341, § 7. The

former article was repealed by Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 4/SB 308, effective July 1, 2005.

Cross references.

Liability of officers and agents for acts performed while fighting fires or performing duties at the scene of emergencies, § 51-1-30.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2020, the Article 1 designation was deleted.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Fire Departments Operating in the State of Georgia, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Firefighter Standards and Training Council, Organization, Rules 205-1-2-.01 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

How probated first offenders to be treated under O.C.G.A. Title 25, Chapter 4. — Individual in the process of serving a period of probation under

O.C.G.A. § 42-8-60 et seq., relating to first offenders, should be treated, for purposes of O.C.G.A. § 25-4-1 et seq., in the same manner as an individual who has satisfac-

torily fulfilled terms of or who has been released from such probation. 1981 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U81-12.

Probation of first offender not conviction under O.C.G.A. Title 25, Chapter 4. — Person in the process of serving a period of probation under O.C.G.A. § 42-8-60 et seq., relating to first offenders, has not been convicted for purposes of

O.C.G.A. § 25-4-1 et seq. 1981 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U81-12.

Fulfillment of terms of probation under O.C.G.A. § 42-8-60 et seq., relating to first offenders, or release by court prior to termination of a period of probation is not a criminal conviction for purposes of O.C.G.A. § 25-4-1 et seq. 1981 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U81-12.

25-4-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 1 et seq.

25-4-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Airport” means any airport located in this state which has regularly scheduled commercial air carrier service or commuter airline service as required for certification under Section 139.49 of the Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

(2) “Airport firefighter” means any person assigned to any airport located in this state who performs the duties of aircraft fire fighting or rescue.

(3) “Candidate” means a prospective firefighter who has not yet been certified by the council as having met the requirements of this chapter.

(4) “Certified firefighter” or “state certified firefighter” means any firefighter who has been certified by the council as having met the requirements of this chapter.

(5) “Council” means the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council.

(5.1) “Fire department” shall have the same meaning as provided in Code Section 25-3-21.

(6) “Firefighter” means a recruit or a trained individual who is a full-time employee, part-time employee, or volunteer for a municipal, county, state, or private incorporated fire department and as such has

duties of responding to mitigate a variety of emergency and nonemergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk, which may include without limitation fire suppression; fire prevention activities; emergency medical services; hazardous materials response and preparedness; technical rescue operations; search and rescue; disaster management and preparedness; community service activities; response to civil disturbances and terrorism incidents; nonemergency functions including training, preplanning, communications, maintenance, and physical conditioning; and other related emergency and nonemergency duties as may be assigned or required; provided, however, that a firefighter's assignments may vary based on geographic, climatic, and demographic conditions or other factors including training, experience, and ability.

(7) "Full-time" means employed for compensation on a basis of at least 40 hours per week by any municipal, county, state, or private incorporated fire department.

(8) "Part-time" means employed for compensation on less than a full-time basis by any municipal, county, state, or private incorporated fire department.

(8.1) "Recruit" means a prospective firefighter who has not yet been certified or registered by the council as having met the requirements of Code Section 25-4-8 and the rules and regulations to be a firefighter as provided for by the council.

(9) "Volunteer" means not employed for compensation on an hourly or salaried basis, but appointed and regularly enrolled to serve as a firefighter for any municipal, county, state, or private incorporated fire department.

(10) "Volunteer council" means the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council established by Code Section 25-4-3.1.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 2; Ga. L. 1987, p. 373, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 4; Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 1/SB 308; Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 2/SB 414; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 2/HB 727; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 4/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, substituted "on an hourly or salaried basis," for "by" in paragraph (9) and added paragraph (10).

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1242, § 1 purported to amend this Code section. However, since it has been determined that the 1980 Act,

which dealt with airport firefighters, was intended to be a new Act (see Editor's note at this chapter), § 1 of the 1980 Act was codified at § 25-4-30, which was subsequently repealed by Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 4/SB 308, effective July 1, 2005.

Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 1/SB 414, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: "This Act shall be known and may be cited as the '2008 Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council Act.'"

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Inmate firefighters should be considered volunteer firefighters as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-4-2 and not a separate category. The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council has the authority to set minimum requirements for volunteer firefighters, the category to which inmates belong, serving as fire-

fighters on fire departments as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-3-21 and to establish and modify by rule and regulation minimum requirements for such fire departments generally, regardless of whether the departments are staffed solely or partially with inmate firefighters. 2012 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 12-4.

25-4-3. Establishment of Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council.

(a) The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council is established. The council shall be composed of 11 members, one of whom shall be the Safety Fire Commissioner or the designated representative of the Safety Fire Commissioner. Two members shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. Two members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The remaining six members shall be appointed by the Governor subject to the following requirements:

- (1) One member shall be a member of the governing authority of a county;
- (2) One member shall be a member of the governing authority of a municipality;
- (3) One member shall be a city or county manager;
- (4) One member shall be the chief of a county or municipal fire department; and
- (5) Two members shall be state certified firefighter training officers.

(b) The members of the council appointed by the Governor pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed at the sole discretion of the Governor. However, the Governor may consider for appointment to the council persons suggested for membership thereon as follows:

- (1) The Association County Commissioners of Georgia may suggest the names of three persons for each appointment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of this Code section;
- (2) The Georgia Municipal Association may suggest the names of three persons for each appointment pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section;
- (3) The Georgia City and County Management Association may

suggest the names of three persons for each appointment pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of this Code section;

(4) The Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs may suggest the names of three persons for each appointment pursuant to paragraph (4) of subsection (a) of this Code section; and

(5) The Executive Board of the Georgia State Firemen's Association may suggest the names of three persons for each appointment pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection (a) of this Code section.

(c)(1) The first members of the council appointed by the Governor pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed to take office on January 1, 1986. The two members appointed pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed for initial terms of one year, the two members appointed pursuant to paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed for initial terms of two years, and the two members appointed pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed for initial terms of three years. Thereafter, successors shall be appointed for terms of three years as the respective terms of office expire.

(2) The members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and the members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each serve for terms concurrent with terms of members of the General Assembly.

(3) All members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. In the event of a vacancy in the membership of the council for any reason, including ceasing to hold an office or position required for membership on the council, the Governor shall fill such vacancy for the unexpired term; except that a vacancy in either of those members of the council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor or the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. In order for the Governor to consider the names of persons suggested for membership on the council pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section, such names must be submitted to the Governor by the respective organizations at least 60 days but not more than 90 days prior to the expiration of the respective terms of office or prior to the appointment of the initial members of the council who take office on January 1, 1986. The Governor shall be authorized, but not required, to request the appropriate organization designated in subsection (b) of this Code section to suggest the names of three persons for the Governor's consideration in making an appointment to fill a vacancy.

(d) At the first regular meeting of the council held in each even-numbered year, the council shall elect a chairperson and such other

officers from its own membership as it deems necessary to serve until successors are elected by the council as provided in this subsection.

(e) The council may, from time to time, designate an advisory committee of not more than three members to assist and advise the council in carrying out its duties under this chapter. The members of any such advisory committee shall serve at the pleasure of the council.

(f) Each member of the council and each member of an advisory committee of the council, in carrying out their official duties, shall be entitled to receive the same expense and mileage allowance authorized for members of professional licensing boards by subsection (f) of Code Section 43-1-2. The funds for such expenses and allowances shall be paid from funds appropriated or available to the Department of Public Safety.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 3; Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 9; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1493, § 2; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 25; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 5; Ga. L. 2004, p. 631, § 25; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

isting Requirements, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Firefighter Standards and Training Council, Organization, Fire Departments Operating in the State of Georgia, Rule 205-1-2-.08.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Request for Waiver or Extension of Ex-

25-4-3.1. Establishment of Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council.

(a) There is established the Georgia Volunteer Fire Service Council which shall serve as a division of the council. The volunteer council shall possess all powers, rights, and duties as set forth by this chapter and shall not be considered an advisory committee as set forth in subsection (e) of Code Section 25-4-3. The volunteer council shall be composed of seven members, all of which shall be members of volunteer fire departments that are otherwise not participants in the paid fire service unless in the capacity as a paid local fire chief in a jurisdiction with all volunteer firefighters. Two members shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. Two members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The remaining three members shall be appointed by the Governor.

(b) The members of the volunteer council appointed by the Governor pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed at the sole discretion of the Governor; provided, however, that the Governor may consider for such appointments persons suggested for membership thereon as follows:

(1) The Association County Commissioners of Georgia may suggest the names of three persons;

(2) The Georgia Municipal Association may suggest the names of three persons;

(3) The Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs may suggest the names of three persons; and

(4) The Executive Board of the Georgia State Firefighters Association may suggest the names of three persons.

(c)(1) The first members of the volunteer council appointed pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall be appointed to take office on January 1, 2021. The two members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor shall be appointed for initial terms of one year, the two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be appointed for initial terms of two years, and the three members appointed by the Governor shall be appointed for initial terms of three years. Thereafter, successors shall be appointed for terms of three years as their respective terms of office expire.

(2) All members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. In the event of a vacancy in the membership of the volunteer council for any reason, including ceasing to meet the qualifications required pursuant subsection (a) of this Code section, the Governor shall fill such vacancy for the unexpired term; provided, however, that a vacancy in those members of the volunteer council appointed by the Lieutenant Governor or the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. In order for the Governor to consider the names of persons suggested for membership on the volunteer council pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section, such names must be submitted to the Governor by the respective organizations at least 60 days but not more than 90 days prior to the expiration of the respective terms of office or prior to the appointment of the initial members of the volunteer council who take office on January 1, 2021. The Governor shall be authorized, but not required, to request the appropriate organization designated in subsection (b) of this Code section to suggest the names of three persons for the Governor's consideration in making an appointment to fill a vacancy.

(d) At the first regular meeting of the volunteer council held in each odd-numbered year, the volunteer council shall elect a chairperson and such other officers from its own membership as it deems necessary to serve until successors are elected by the volunteer council as provided in this Code section.

(e) The volunteer council may, from time to time, designate an advisory committee to assist and advise the volunteer council in carrying out its duties under this chapter. The members of any such advisory committee shall serve at the pleasure of the volunteer council.

(f) Each member of the volunteer council and each member of an advisory committee of the volunteer council, in carrying out their official duties, shall be entitled to receive the same expense and mileage allowance authorized for members of professional licensing boards by subsection (f) of Code Section 43-1-2. The funds for such expenses and allowances shall be paid from funds appropriated or available to the Department of Public Safety.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-4-3.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 5/SB 342.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective January 1, 2021.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2023, “chapter” was substituted for “article” in the second sentence of subsection (a) and the first sentence of subsection (e).

25-4-4. Eligibility of council and volunteer council members for public office.

Membership on the council or volunteer council does not constitute public office, and no member shall be disqualified from holding public office by reason of his or her membership.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 4; Ga. L. 1977, p. 549, § 1; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 6/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, inserted “or volunteer council” and “or her”.

ary 1, 2021, inserted “or volunteer council” and “or her”.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 48 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 12, 21, 22, 37 et seq.

25-4-5. Administrative assignment to Department of Public Safety; source of funds; authority to accept gifts and other items of value.

The council and volunteer council are assigned to the Department of Public Safety for administrative purposes. The funds necessary to carry out this chapter shall come from funds appropriated to and available to the council and volunteer council and from any other available funds. The council and volunteer council are authorized to accept and use gifts, grants, and donations for the purpose of carrying out this chapter. The council and volunteer council are also authorized to accept and use property, both real and personal, and services for the purpose of carrying out this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 4; Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 9; Ga. L. 1977, p. 549, § 1; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 7/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, substituted “and volunteer council are” for “is” three times; inserted “and volunteer council” in the second sen-

ary 1, 2021, substituted “and volunteer council are” for “is” three times; inserted “and volunteer council” in the second sen-

tence; and substituted “article” for “chapter” at the end of the last sentence.

Cross references.

Assignment for administrative purposes, § 50-4-3.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2023, “chapter” was substituted for “article” at the end of the last sentence of this Code section.

25-4-6. Meetings, quorum, and annual reporting of council and volunteer council.

(a) The business of the council shall be conducted in the following manner:

(1) The council shall hold at least two regular meetings each year at the call of the chairperson or upon the written request of six members of the council. Six members of the council shall constitute a quorum. The council shall adopt such rules for the transaction of its business as it shall desire and may appoint such committees as it considers necessary to carry out its business and duties; and

(2) The council shall make an annual report of its activities to the Governor and to the General Assembly and shall include in the report its recommendations for appropriate legislation. The council shall not be required to distribute copies of the annual report to the members of the General Assembly but shall notify the members of the availability of the report in the manner which it deems to be most effective and efficient.

(b) The business of the volunteer council shall be conducted in the following manner:

(1) The volunteer council shall hold at least two regular meetings each year at the call of the chairperson or upon written request of four members of the volunteer council. Four members of the volunteer council shall constitute a quorum. The volunteer council shall adopt such rules for the transaction of its business as it shall desire and may appoint such committees as it considers necessary to carry out its business and duties; and

(2) The volunteer council shall make an annual report of its activities to the Governor and to the General Assembly and shall include in the report its recommendations for appropriate legislation. The volunteer council shall not be required to distribute copies of the annual report to the members of the General Assembly but shall notify the members of the availability of the report in the manner which it deems to be most effective and efficient.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 5; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1493, § 3; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1036, § 21/SB 49; Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 3/SB 414; Ga. L.

2010, p. 878, § 25/HB 1387; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 8/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, designated the existing pro-

visions as subsection (a) and added subsection (b).

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 1/SB 414, not

codified by the General Assembly, provides: "This Act shall be known and may be cited as the '2008 Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council Act.'"

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 89.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedures, § 43 et seq.

25-4-7. Functions and powers of council and volunteer council.

(a) The council is vested with the following functions and powers:

(1) To promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the council;

(2) To provide rules of procedure for its internal management and control;

(3) To enter into contracts or do such things as may be necessary and incidental to the administration of its authority pursuant to this chapter;

(4) To establish uniform minimum standards for the employment and training of full-time firefighters, part-time firefighters, airport firefighters, fire and life safety educators, fire inspectors, fire investigators, and other such firefighting service professionals as determined by the council, including qualifications, certifications, recertifications, decertifications, and probations for certified individuals and suspensions for noncertified individuals, and requirements, which are consistent with this chapter;

(5) To establish minimum curriculum requirements for schools operated by or for any employing agency for the specific purpose of training firefighter recruits or full-time firefighters, part-time firefighters, airport firefighters, fire and life safety educators, fire inspectors, and fire investigators;

(6) To approve institutions and facilities for school operation by or for any employing agency for the specific purpose of training full-time and part-time firefighters and full-time and part-time firefighter recruits, including airport firefighters;

(7) To make or support studies on any aspect of firefighter education and training or recruitment;

(8) To make recommendations concerning any matter within its purview;

(9) To establish basic firefighter training requirements for full-

time, part-time, and contract firefighters, including airport firefighters;

(10) To certify any person satisfactorily complying with the training program established in accordance with paragraph (9) of this subsection and the qualifications for employment covered in this chapter; and

(11) To issue a certificate to any person who has received training in another state or who has received training as a federal firefighter by the United States government, when the council has determined that the training was at least equivalent to that required by the council for approved firefighter education and training programs in this state and when the person has satisfactorily complied with all other requirements of this chapter.

(b) The volunteer council is vested with the following functions and powers:

(1) To promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the volunteer council;

(2) To provide rules of procedure for its internal management and control;

(3) To enter into contracts or do such things as may be necessary and incidental to the administration of its authority pursuant to this chapter;

(4) To establish uniform minimum standards for the training of volunteer firefighters, including qualifications, certifications, and requirements, which are consistent with this chapter;

(5) To make or support studies on any aspect of firefighter education and training or recruitment;

(6) To make recommendations concerning any matter within its purview;

(7) To establish basic firefighter training requirements for volunteer firefighters;

(8) To certify any person satisfactorily complying with the training program established in accordance with paragraph (7) of this subsection and the qualifications for serving as a volunteer firefighter covered in this chapter; and

(9) To issue a certificate to any person who has received training in another state or who has received training as a federal firefighter by the United States government, when the volunteer council has determined that the training was at least equivalent to that required by the volunteer council for approved volunteer firefighter education

and training programs in this state and when the person has satisfactorily complied with all other requirements of this chapter.

(c) All rules and regulations promulgated by the volunteer council may be overturned by a two-thirds' vote of the council. In such instance, the rule or regulation shall be returned to the volunteer council for reconsideration.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 6; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 6; Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 2/SB 308; Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 4/SB 414; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 3/HB 727; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 9/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, designated the existing provisions as subsection (a); substituted “firefighters, part-time firefighters,” for “part-time or volunteer firefighters” in paragraphs (a)(4) and (a)(5); inserted a comma following “council” in paragraph (a)(4); inserted “full-time and part-time” twice in paragraph (a)(6); substituted “firefighter” for “fire-fighting” in para-

graph (a)(7); substituted “and contract firefighters” for “contract, and volunteer firefighters” in paragraph (a)(9); substituted “subsection” for “Code section” in paragraph (a)(10); and added subsections (b) and (c).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 1/SB 414, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘2008 Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council Act.’”

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council has authority to establish qualifications and requirements, including curriculum, for firefighters and employing agencies, and any waiver of curriculum requirements or new categories of certification can be authorized only by amendment of existing regulations or promulgation of new ones. 1977 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 77-44.

Minimum requirements for inmate firefighters. — Inmate firefighters should be considered volunteer firefighters as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-4-2 and

not a separate category. The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council has the authority to set minimum requirements for volunteer firefighters, the category to which inmates belong, serving as firefighters on fire departments as defined in O.C.G.A. § 25-3-21 and to establish and modify by rule and regulation minimum requirements for such fire departments generally, regardless of whether the departments are staffed solely or partially with inmate firefighters. 2012 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 12-4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 48 et seq.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 79 et seq.

25-4-7.1. Appointment of executive director; employment of other personnel.

(a) The council, in conjunction with the volunteer council, shall

appoint and establish the compensation of an executive director who shall serve at the pleasure of the council.

(b) The executive director may contract for such services and employ such other professional, technical, and clerical personnel as may be necessary and convenient to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(c) The executive director shall provide the same services in support of the volunteer council as provided to the council.

(d) The executive director shall bring all issues involving volunteer firefighters and volunteer fire departments to the volunteer council.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-4-7.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 7; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 10/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, added “, in conjunction with

the volunteer council,” near the beginning of subsection (a) and added subsections (c) and (d).

25-4-8. Qualifications of firefighters generally.

(a) Except as provided in Code Section 25-4-12, any employee, volunteer, or private contractor of a fire department operating in this state or certified as a firefighter shall, as prescribed by the council:

(1) Be at least 18 years of age;

(2) Not have been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, a felony in any jurisdiction or of a crime which if committed in this state would constitute a felony under the laws of this state within ten years prior to employment, provided that a person who has been convicted of a felony more than five but less than ten years prior to employment may be certified and employed as a firefighter when the person has:

(A) Successfully completed a training program following the Georgia Fire Academy curriculum and sponsored by the Department of Corrections pursuant to Code Section 42-5-57;

(B) Been recommended to a fire department by the proper authorities at the institution at which the training program was undertaken; and

(C) Met all other requirements as set forth in this chapter.

The council shall be the final authority with respect to authorizing the employment, appointment, and certification of a person who has been convicted of a felony more than five but less than ten years prior to seeking employment when the person is seeking employment as a firefighter for any municipal, county, or state fire department which employs three or more firefighters who work a minimum of 40 hours per week and has the responsibility

of preventing and suppressing fires, protecting life and property, and enforcing municipal, county, and state codes, as well as enforcing any law pertaining to the prevention and control of fires;

(3) Have a good moral character as determined by investigation under procedure approved by the council;

(4) Be fingerprinted and a search made of local, state, and national fingerprint files to disclose any criminal record;

(5) Be in good physical condition as determined by a medical examination and successfully pass the minimum physical agility requirements as established by the council; and

(6) Possess or achieve within 12 months after employment a high school diploma or a state approved high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, provided that the council may by rule or regulation prescribe for the waiver of such requirement.

(b) For the purposes of this Code section, a person shall be deemed to have been convicted of a crime if such person shall have pleaded guilty to a charge thereof before a court or federal magistrate or shall have been found guilty thereof by the decision or judgment of a court or federal magistrate or by the verdict of a jury, irrespective of the pronouncement of sentence or the suspension thereof, unless such plea of guilty or such decision, judgment, or verdict shall have been set aside, reversed, or otherwise abrogated by lawful judicial process or unless the person convicted of the crime shall have received a pardon therefor from the President of the United States or the governor or other pardoning authority in the jurisdiction where the conviction was had or shall have received a certificate of good conduct granted by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles pursuant to the provisions of law to remove a disability under law because of such conviction. Any person convicted of a felony while he or she is a certified firefighter shall have his or her certification revoked.

(c)(1) For the purposes of making determinations relating to eligibility under this Code section, a local fire department shall provide information relative to prospective employees to the local law enforcement agency and a state fire department shall provide information relative to prospective employees to a state law enforcement agency. Such local or state law enforcement agency shall be authorized to obtain conviction data with respect to such prospective employees of a local or state fire department as authorized in this subsection. The local or state law enforcement agency shall submit to the Georgia Crime Information Center two complete sets of fingerprints of the applicant for appointment or employment, the required records search fees, and such other information as may be required.

Upon receipt thereof, the Georgia Crime Information Center shall promptly transmit one set of fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a search of bureau records and an appropriate report and shall retain the other set and promptly conduct a search of its own records and records to which it has access. The Georgia Crime Information Center shall notify the local or state law enforcement agency in writing of any derogatory finding, including, but not limited to, any conviction data regarding the fingerprint records check or if there is no such finding. All conviction data received by the local or state law enforcement agency shall not be a public record, shall be privileged, and shall not be disclosed to any other person or agency except as provided in this subsection and except to any person or agency which otherwise has a legal right to inspect the employment file. All such records shall be maintained by the local or state law enforcement agency pursuant to laws regarding such records and the rules and regulations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Georgia Crime Information Center, as applicable. As used in this subsection, “conviction data” means a record of a finding or verdict of guilty or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere with regard to any crime, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought.

(2) The local or state law enforcement agency shall provide to the chief of the fire department which requested information on an applicant any criminal data indicating that the applicant was convicted of a felony. Such information may be provided to the council. The provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection relating to privileged information and records of conviction data shall apply to any information provided by a law enforcement agency to a fire department.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 7; Ga. L. 1977, p. 1224, § 7; Ga. L. 1980, p. 601, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 989, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1983, p. 3, § 18; Ga. L. 1985, p. 283, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 325, § 1; Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 5/SB 414; Ga. L. 2012, p. 83, § 1/HB 247; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 4/HB 727; Ga. L. 2018, p. 202, § 1/HB 699; Ga. L. 2021, p. 782, § 1/SB 46; Ga. L. 2022, p. 168, § 6/SB 397.

The 2021 amendment, effective May 10, 2021, added “pursuant to Code Section 42-5-57” at the end of subparagraph (a)(2)(A).

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2022, substituted “state approved high

school equivalency (HSE) diploma” for “general education development equivalency” in paragraph (a)(6).

Cross references.

Qualifications of peace officers generally, § 35-8-8.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2008, p. 243, § 1/SB 414, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘2008 Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council Act.’”

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

O.C.G.A. § 25-4-8 to be strictly construed. — As with any statute which imposes a penalty for forfeiture, O.C.G.A. § 25-4-8 should be strictly construed. 1981 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U81-12.

“Conviction” construed. — Word “conviction,” strictly construed, means an adjudication of guilt which is final. 1981 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U81-12.

Fulfillment of probation terms or release prior to termination of probation not a criminal conviction. — Fulfillment of the terms of probation under Ga. L. 1968, p. 324 (see now O.C.G.A.

§ 42-8-60 et seq.), or the release by the presiding court prior to the termination of a period of probation is not a criminal conviction for purposes of Ga. L. 1971, p. 693 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-4-1 et seq.). 1976 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 76-130.

An “airport firefighter,” in addition to meeting minimum training requirements for airport firefighters contained in former O.C.G.A. § 25-4-31 [repealed], must meet basic qualifications for a “firefighter” as specified in O.C.G.A. § 25-4-8. 1982 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 82-73.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, §§ 11, 48 et seq., 68 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, § 21 et seq.

25-4-8.1. Qualifications for volunteer firefighters.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in Code Section 25-4-12, any person volunteering at a volunteer fire department as a volunteer firefighter shall, as prescribed by the volunteer council:

(1) Be at least 18 years of age;

(2) Not have been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, a felony in any jurisdiction or of a crime which if committed in this state would constitute a felony under the laws of this state within ten years prior to volunteering, provided that a person who has been convicted of a felony more than five but less than ten years prior to volunteering may be registered as a volunteer firefighter when the person has:

(A) Successfully completed a training program following the Georgia Fire Academy curriculum and sponsored by the Department of Corrections;

(B) Been recommended to a volunteer fire department by the proper authorities at the institution at which the training program was undertaken; and

(C) Met all other requirements for a volunteer firefighter as set forth in this chapter.

(b) For the purposes of this Code section, a person shall be deemed to have been convicted of a crime if such person shall have pleaded guilty to a charge thereof before a court or federal magistrate or shall have been found guilty thereof by the decision or judgment of a court or

federal magistrate or by the verdict of a jury, irrespective of the pronouncement of sentence or the suspension thereof, unless such plea of guilty or such decision, judgment, or verdict shall have been set aside, reversed, or otherwise abrogated by lawful judicial process or unless the person convicted of the crime shall have received a pardon therefor from the President of the United States or the governor or other pardoning authority in the jurisdiction where the conviction was had or shall have received a certificate of good conduct granted by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles pursuant to the provisions of law to remove a disability under law because of such conviction. Any person convicted of a felony while he or she is a registered volunteer firefighter shall have his or her registration revoked.

(c)(1) For purposes of making determinations relating to eligibility under this Code section, a local volunteer fire department shall provide information relative to prospective volunteers to the local law enforcement agency or other agency having access to the Georgia Crime Information Center for a search to determine if the prospective volunteer has been convicted of a felony in Georgia. Such local agency shall be authorized to obtain conviction data with respect to such prospective volunteers of a local volunteer fire department as authorized in this subsection. All conviction data received by the local agency shall not be a public record, shall be privileged, and shall not be disclosed to any other person or agency except as provided in this subsection and except to any person or agency which otherwise has a legal right to inspect the file. All such records shall be maintained by the local agency pursuant to laws regarding such records and the rules and regulations of the Georgia Crime Information Center, as applicable. As used in this subsection, “conviction data” means a record of a finding or verdict of guilty or plea of guilty or plea of nolo contendere with regard to any crime, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought.

(2) The volunteer council shall create a form upon which may be indicated only whether the prospective volunteer was convicted of a felony or has no felony convictions. The local agency shall complete such form and shall provide same to the chief of the fire department which requested information on a prospective volunteer. Such information may be provided to the volunteer council. The provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection relating to privileged information and records of conviction data shall apply to any information provided by a local agency to a local volunteer fire department.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-4-8.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 11/SB 342.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective January 1, 2021.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, Code Section 24-5-8.1, as enacted by Ga. L.

2020, p. 515, § 11/SB 342, was redesignated as Code Section 25-4-8.1.

25-4-9. Basic firefighter training course; transfer of certification.

(a)(1)(A) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, full-time, and part-time firefighters, including airport firefighters, shall successfully complete a basic training course. The council shall determine the course content, number of hours, and all other matters relative to basic firefighter training, including airport rescue firefighter training for full-time and part-time firefighters. Upon satisfactory completion of such basic training, a firefighter shall be issued a certificate of completion evidencing the same. Each firefighter shall be required to successfully complete such basic training course within 12 months after being employed or appointed as a firefighter or, in the case of airport firefighters, within such time period as the council may prescribe by rule or regulation.

(B) The volunteer council shall determine the course content, number of hours, and all other matters relative to basic firefighter training for volunteer firefighters. Each volunteer firefighter shall be required to complete such basic training course within 18 months after being appointed as volunteer firefighter.

(2) Each firefighter who presents to the council, or to the volunteer council in the case of volunteer firefighters, satisfactory documentation, as determined by the council or volunteer council, of his or her training as a member of the United States armed forces, the Georgia National Guard, or the Georgia Air National Guard shall be issued a certificate of completion by the council or volunteer council.

(b) A firefighter certified by the council may, upon termination of employment from any fire department and upon agreement with a subsequently employing fire department, transfer such certification to the employing fire department.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this Code section, any local fire department may refuse to accept the transfer of previously acquired certification and may require any newly employed firefighter to complete the basic training course provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 8; Ga. L. 1985, p. 1493, § 4; Ga. L. 2002, p. 660, § 4; Ga. L.

2002, p. 1259, § 11; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 8; Ga. L. 2005, p. 619, § 3/SB 308; Ga.

L. 2018, p. 202, § 2/HB 699; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 12/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, designated the existing provisions of paragraph (a)(1) as subparagraph (a)(1)(A); in subparagraph (a)(1)(A), substituted “and part-time firefighters” for “part-time, and volunteer firefighters”

in the first sentence, and added “for full-time and part-time firefighters” at the end of the second sentence; added subparagraph (a)(1)(B); and, in paragraph (a)(2), inserted “, or to the volunteer council in the case of volunteer firefighters,” and “or volunteer council” twice.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Certification and training of federally paid employees considered firefighters. — Federally paid employees of a fire department subject to this article who are considered “firefighters” by virtue of the nature of their duties and their status as “employees” must obtain certification under the Georgia Firefighter Standards

and Training Act, (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-4-1 et seq.) including all required training even if the training covers activities which are not part of the employees’ duties; employees who are not considered “firefighters” may acquire training, but cannot receive certification under the Act. 1977 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 77-44.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, §§ 11, 48 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 22, 210.

25-4-10. Mandatory training.

(a) As a condition of continued certification, all full-time and part-time firefighters shall train, drill, or study at schools, classes, or courses at the local, area, or state level, as specified by the council. Authorized leaves of absence are expected.

(b) As a condition of continued certification, all volunteer firefighters shall train, drill, or study at schools, classes, or courses at the local, area, or state level, as specified by the volunteer council. Authorized leaves of absence are expected.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 11; Ga. L. 2003, p. 888, § 9; Ga. L. 2020, p. 515, § 13/SB 342.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, designated the existing pro-

visions as subsection (a); inserted “full-time and part-time” in the first sentence of subsection (a); and added subsection (b).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, §§ 11, 48 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, §§ 22, 210.

25-4-11. Adoption of higher training requirements by employing agencies.

This chapter shall provide only the minimum qualification standards in training requirements for firefighters in this state and does not restrict any employing agency from setting and establishing requirements that exceed these minimum standards.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 9.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, §§ 11, 48 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, § 21 et seq.

25-4-11.1. Random testing for illegal drug usage by qualified firefighters.

(a) All firefighters qualified based upon successful completion of training set forth in subparagraph (a)(2)(A) of Code Section 25-4-8 shall be subject to random testing for evidence of use of illegal drugs. Such testing shall occur at least biannually for the first two years of licensure or certification. Such testing shall be noninvasive and may be conducted at any time during the calendar year, and the cost of all such testing shall be borne by the employer. If the drug test shows the presence of drugs in the firefighter's system, the results of the test will be confirmed with an alternative method by using the same urine sample.

(b) The council shall adopt rules and regulations for purposes of testing and retesting for illegal drugs, including:

- (1) Which illegal drugs will be the subject of testing;
- (2) Methods for ensuring minimal privacy intrusions during collection of body fluid specimens for such testing;
- (3) Methods for ensuring proper storage, transportation, and handling of such specimens in order to maintain the integrity of the testing process;
- (4) Which persons should be entitled to the results of such tests and which methods should be used for ensuring that only authorized persons are given access to such results;
- (5) A list of laboratories qualified to conduct established drug tests; and
- (6) Procedures through which firefighters, prior to the collection of body fluid specimens for such testing, may provide information to

their employers regarding use of any drug pursuant to a medical prescription or, as otherwise authorized by law, any substance which could affect the results of such test.

(c) Any rules or regulations adopted pursuant to this Code section shall be in compliance with Parts 40 and 382 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-4-11.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2021, p. 782, § 2/SB 46.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective May 10, 2021.

25-4-12. Applicability of chapter.

Nothing in this chapter shall apply to firefighters employed on July 1, 1971, and such firefighters are not required to meet the requirements of Code Section 25-4-8 or Code Section 25-4-9 as a condition of tenure or continued employment; nor shall their failure to fulfill such requirements make them ineligible for any promotional examination for which they are otherwise eligible, affect in any way any pension rights to which they are otherwise eligible, or affect in any way pension rights to which they may be entitled on July 1, 1971. The council shall have the authority to investigate qualifications of, and in its discretion to issue certificates to, those previously trained firefighters employed on July 1, 1971.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 693, § 10; Ga. L. 2021, p. 922, § 25/HB 497.

The 2021 amendment, effective May 10, 2021, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Nothing in this chapter” for “Except as otherwise provided in Article 2, nothing in this chapter” at the beginning of this Code section.

CHAPTER 5

RESOLUTION OF WAGES, HOURS, WORKING CONDITIONS OF FIREFIGHTERS

Sec.		Sec.	
25-5-1.	Short title.	25-5-10.	Factors to be considered by mediation board.
25-5-2.	Definitions.	25-5-11.	Payment of expenses of mediation.
25-5-3.	Declaration of public policy.	25-5-12.	Negotiated agreements constituting collective bargaining contracts; prohibition of work stoppages, slowdowns, or strikes by firefighters.
25-5-4.	Right of firefighters to bargain collectively.	25-5-13.	Service of notice when collective bargaining matters require appropriation of money by municipality.
25-5-5.	Selection of bargaining agent by firefighters; recognition by corporate authority.	25-5-14.	Applicability of chapter.
25-5-6.	Obligations of corporate authority and agent.		
25-5-7.	Submission of unresolved issues to mediation.		
25-5-8.	Composition and selection of mediation board.		
25-5-9.	Hearings of mediation board.		

25-5-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Firefighter’s Mediation Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

First Amendment protection for publicly employed firefighters subjected to

discharge, transfer, or discipline because of speech, 106 A.L.R. Fed. 396.

25-5-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Corporate authorities” means the proper officials within any municipality whose duty it is to establish the wages, salaries, rates of pay, hours, working conditions, and other terms and conditions of employment of firefighters, as defined in paragraph (2) of this Code section, whether they are the mayor, city manager, city administrator, city council, board of aldermen, director of personnel, personnel board, or any combination thereof, or by whatever other name the same may be designated. The term shall also mean the employing authority for firefighters at Central State Hospital.

(2) “Firefighter” means the permanent members of any paid fire

department of any municipality of this state having a population of 20,000 or more according to the United States decennial census of 1980 or any future such census who are employed for and subject to fire-fighting duties.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 3.

sibilities of Public Employers in Georgia,"
see 5 Ga. St. B.J. 10 (1999).

Law reviews.

For article, "Employment Law Respon-

25-5-3. Declaration of public policy.

(a) The protection of the public health, safety, and welfare demands that the permanent members of any paid fire department of a municipality should not be accorded the right to strike or engage in any work stoppage or slowdown. This necessary prohibition, however, shall not prohibit such municipal employees from being represented by a labor organization of their choice and from bargaining collectively concerning wages, rates of pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

(b) It is declared to be the public policy of this state to accord to the permanent members of any paid fire department of those municipalities which are covered by this chapter all of the privileges enumerated in subsection (a) of this Code section other than the right to strike or to engage in any work stoppage or slowdown. To provide for the exercise of these privileges, a method of mediation of disputes is established.

(c) The establishment of a method of mediation referred to in subsection (b) of this Code section shall not, however, in any way whatever, be deemed to be a recognition by the state of compulsory mediation or arbitration as a superior method of settling labor disputes between employees who possess the right to strike and their employers but rather shall be deemed to be a recognition solely of the necessity to provide some alternative mode of settling disputes where employees are, as a matter of public policy, denied the right to strike.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

48 Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 552.

C.J.S.

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, §§ 37, 280.
51A C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 321.

25-5-4. Right of firefighters to bargain collectively.

Firefighters shall have the right to bargain collectively with their respective corporate authorities and to be represented by a labor organization in such collective bargaining as to wages, rates of pay,

hours, working conditions, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 163 et seq.

ALR.

Who are supervisors for purposes of

bargaining-unit determination in state public employment labor relations, 96 A.L.R.3d 723.

25-5-5. Selection of bargaining agent by firefighters; recognition by corporate authority.

The organization selected by vote of the majority of the firefighters in any fire department shall be recognized by the proper corporate authority, provided the organization does not advocate striking and has a “no strike” clause in its constitution and bylaws, as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for all of the members of the fire department unless and until recognition of the labor organization is withdrawn by vote of a majority of the firefighters of the fire department. In lieu of an organization, a person may be selected as the bargaining agent and have the same obligations and privileges.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 5.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, §§ 227, 228.

ALR.

Effect of alleged misstatements or mis-

representations in campaign literature, material, or leaflets on validity of representation election, 3 A.L.R.3d 889.

25-5-6. Obligations of corporate authority and agent.

It shall be the obligation of the proper corporate authority and the bargaining agent to meet and confer in good faith within 30 days after receipt of a written notice from the bargaining agent of the request for a meeting for collective bargaining purposes. This obligation may include the duty to cause any agreement resulting from negotiations to be reduced to a written contract. No such contract shall exceed the term of one year.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

48A Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 2182 et seq.

C.J.S.

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 233 et seq.

25-5-7. Submission of unresolved issues to mediation.

If the bargaining agent and the corporate authorities are unable, within 30 days from and including the date of their first meeting, to reach an agreement on a contract, any and all unresolved issues shall be submitted to mediation.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

48B Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 2435 et seq.

C.J.S.

51A C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 483 et seq.

25-5-8. Composition and selection of mediation board.

Within five days from the expiration of the 30 day period referred to in Code Section 25-5-7, the bargaining agent and the corporate authorities shall each select and name one mediator and shall immediately thereafter notify each other in writing of the name and address of the person so selected. The bargaining agent may name as its mediator a working firefighter who shall be an active member of the Professional Firefighters of Georgia; and the corporate authorities may name as its mediator a member of the Georgia Municipal Association. The two mediators so selected and named shall, within ten days from and after the expiration of the five-day period mentioned in this Code section, agree upon the selection of a third mediator. If, on the expiration of the period allowed therefor, the mediators are unable to agree upon the selection of a third mediator, the American Arbitration Association shall select him upon request in writing from either the bargaining agent or the corporate authorities. The third mediator, whether selected as a result of agreement between the two mediators previously selected or selected by the American Arbitration Association, shall act as chairman of the mediation board.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

48B Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 2435 et seq.

C.J.S.

51A C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 541.

25-5-9. Hearings of mediation board.

(a) The mediation board, acting through its chairman, shall call a hearing to be held within ten days after the date of the appointment of the chairman and, acting through its chairman, shall give at least seven days' notice in writing to each of the other two mediators, the bargaining agent, and the corporate authorities of the time and place of the hearing. The hearing shall be informal, and the rules of evidence prevailing in judicial proceedings shall not be binding. Any and all documentary evidence and other data deemed relevant by the mediators may be received in evidence. The mediators shall have the power to request by subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books, records, and other evidence relative or pertinent to the issues presented to them for determination.

(b) Hearings conducted by the mediators shall be concluded within 20 days of the time of commencement. Within ten days after the conclusion of the hearings, the mediators shall make written findings and a written opinion upon the issues presented, a copy of which shall be mailed or otherwise transmitted to the bargaining agent or its attorney or other designated representative and the corporate authorities. A majority decision of the mediators shall be advisory in nature and shall not be binding upon either the bargaining agent or the corporate authorities.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 9.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 89.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 39 et seq.

25-5-10. Factors to be considered by mediation board.

The mediators shall conduct the hearing and render their decision upon the basis of a prompt, peaceful, and just settlement of wage or hour disputes between the firefighters and the corporate authority. The factors, among others, to be given weight by the mediators in arriving at a decision shall include:

- (1) A comparison of wages or hourly conditions of employment of the fire department in question with wage rates or hourly conditions

of employment of fire departments in municipalities of comparable size;

(2) The interest and welfare of the public; and

(3) A comparison of the peculiarities of fire-fighting employment in regard to other trades or professions, specifically:

(A) The hazards of employment;

(B) The physical qualifications;

(C) The educational qualifications;

(D) The mental qualifications; and

(E) The job training and skills.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 10.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

48 Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 356 et seq.

C.J.S.

51A C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 483 et seq.

25-5-11. Payment of expenses of mediation.

The expenses incurred by the bargaining agent in connection with the mediation shall be borne by the bargaining agent. The expenses incurred by the corporate authorities in connection with the mediation shall be borne by such authorities. The necessary expenses incurred by the third mediator shall be borne equally between the bargaining agent and the corporate authorities.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 11.

25-5-12. Negotiated agreements constituting collective bargaining contracts; prohibition of work stoppages, slowdowns, or strikes by firefighters.

(a) Any agreement actually negotiated between the bargaining agent and the corporate authorities either before or within 30 days after mediation shall constitute the collective bargaining contract governing firefighters and the municipality for the period stated therein. Such period shall not exceed one year.

(b) Any collective bargaining agreement negotiated under this chapter shall specifically provide that the firefighters who are subject to its terms shall have no right to engage in any work stoppage, slowdown, or strike, the consideration for such provision being the right to a

resolution of disputed questions. Whether or not a collective bargaining agreement has been negotiated, no firefighter shall engage in any work stoppage, slowdown, or strike at any time.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 12; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 25.

Cross references.

Strikes by state employees, § 45-19-1 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

48A Am. Jur. 2d, Labor and Labor Relations, § 2172 et seq.

C.J.S.

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 233.

25-5-13. Service of notice when collective bargaining matters require appropriation of money by municipality.

Whenever wages, rates of pay, or any other matter requiring appropriation of money by any municipality are included as a matter of collective bargaining conducted under this chapter, it is the obligation of the bargaining agent to serve written notice of a request for collective bargaining on the corporate authorities at least 120 days before the last day on which money can be appropriated by the municipality to cover the contract period which is the subject of the collective bargaining procedure.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 13.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

51 C.J.S., Labor Relations, § 167.

25-5-14. Applicability of chapter.

(a) Before a municipality with a population of 20,000 or more and its firefighters may come under this chapter, the governing authority of the municipality must agree by ordinance that the municipality will be so covered.

(b) In no case may a city with a population of less than 20,000 come under this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 565, § 14.

sibilities of Public Employers in Georgia,” see 5 Ga. St. B.J. 10 (1999).

Law reviews.

For article, “Employment Law Respon-

CHAPTER 6

MUTUAL AID RESOURCE PACTS

Sec.		Sec.	
25-6-1.	"Jurisdiction" defined.		pacts; entry into agreements with state and federal agencies by pacts.
25-6-2.	Formation of district mutual aid resource systems or pacts authorized.	25-6-7.	Joining of pacts by jurisdictions not having fire departments; withdrawal from pacts.
25-6-3.	Establishment, organization, and governance of pacts.	25-6-8.	Establishment of pact districts; joining of nonmember jurisdictions to pact districts.
25-6-4.	Purpose of pacts; powers and duties of pacts generally.	25-6-9.	Merger of pact districts.
25-6-5.	Liabilities, privileges, and immunities of pacts, members, and personnel.	25-6-10.	Continuation of operation of preexistent pacts.
25-6-6.	Appropriation of funds for pacts by member jurisdictions; receipt of gifts by	25-6-11.	Penalty for violations of chapter.

25-6-1. "Jurisdiction" defined.

For the purposes of this chapter, the term "jurisdiction" means a federal agency, a state agency, a local governmental subdivision of this state or an adjoining state, or an industrial or private organization which has established a fire-fighting department that is responsible for fire protection services within the area under the control, supervision, or management of the specific "jurisdiction." A "jurisdiction" may be one of the following, but is not limited to the following: towns, cities, counties outside corporate limits, industrial complexes, specific fire protection areas, military bases, private fire departments, volunteer fire departments, and the like.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 2; Ga. L. 1982, p. 955, §§ 2, 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations, Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 100.

ALR.

Use beyond municipal limits of municipal equipment for extinguishment of fires, 122 A.L.R. 1158.

25-6-2. Formation of district mutual aid resource systems or pacts authorized.

Whenever two or more jurisdictions, as defined by Code Section 25-6-1, within or adjacent to this state, by written resolution authorize their respective fire departments to render aid and assistance in the

extinguishment of fires or other immediate response emergencies outside of their respective jurisdictions, they may, if they so desire, form a district mutual aid system or pact, which shall be a public corporation. It is the primary intent that such system or pact be established for fire emergencies; however, due to the diverse emergency services expected of fire departments, mutual aid systems or pacts may include responses for any form of immediate response emergency as specified by members of the system or pact. Members of fire departments of member jurisdictions shall be considered as officers of a public municipal corporation and shall enjoy the privileges, rights, exemptions, immunities, and duties of such; and this shall apply to paid, volunteer, or private members when responding to or returning from rendering aid in an emergency under a mutual aid system or a pact. As used in this chapter, "pact" means a mutual aid resource pact.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 955, §§ 1, 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

18 Am. Jur. 2d, Corporations, § 30. 56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations, Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 160 et seq.

ALR.

Use beyond municipal limits of municipal equipment for extinguishment of fires, 122 A.L.R. 1158.

25-6-3. Establishment, organization, and governance of pacts.

(a) When two or more jurisdictions desire to establish a pact, each jurisdiction shall designate its fire chief or person or position in charge of its fire department to act for that jurisdiction on all matters relating to the activities and functions of the pact, once it has been established. The jurisdiction shall designate the person or position and its intent to be a member of a pact by a written resolution. The resolutions shall be forwarded to the state fire marshal. Upon receipt of at least two resolutions, the state fire marshal or his authorized representative shall call the first organizational meeting of the system by giving notice to all persons designated by the resolutions to act for potential member jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction shall send its designated person or his authorized representative to the organizational and subsequent meetings. Such person shall be entitled to one vote in all proceedings.

(b) At the organizational meeting, the pact members shall adopt articles of association and bylaws and regulations for the future government and operation of the pact, which shall be effective upon submission to and approval by the Attorney General, who shall cause the same to be promptly recorded by the Secretary of State. Such recording shall formally establish the pact.

(c) At the organizational meeting, the member delegates shall also elect a board of directors consisting of such members as may be determined by the organization delegates. The board of directors shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected and qualified, provided that at the organizational or any subsequent meeting the member delegates may vote for staggered terms for all members of the board of directors, the length of which shall not exceed five years or until the director's successor is elected and qualified.

(d) The directors shall choose from their number the officers of the pact, who shall have such duties and powers as the bylaws allow. Within the limits of funds available to it, the board of directors may employ and fix the compensation of such agents and other personnel as the board deems necessary to carry out the coordinating functions and other responsibilities of the system. Such personnel shall include a nontactical coordinator who shall serve at the pleasure of the board and who shall have and exercise such powers and authority as the board may delegate to him.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 4; Ga. L. 1982, p. 955, §§ 1, 5.

25-6-4. Purpose of pacts; powers and duties of pacts generally.

(a) It shall be the primary purpose of a pact to coordinate the emergency fire services of all jurisdictions belonging to it, so as to provide better, more efficient, and more effective cooperation in the protection of life and property from fires or other immediate response emergencies within the area served by the pact.

(b) Any pact established under authority of this chapter is charged with the responsibility of establishing an overall plan or plans for carrying out the intended purpose and other provisions of this chapter. No pact may be established unless it complies with this chapter. Within the limits of funds available to it, the pact may acquire and operate property and equipment, including, but not limited to, a dispatch center and a communications center; and it may extend the advantages of group purchasing and benefits to jurisdictions that are members of the pact. Member jurisdictions shall adopt the training programs of the Georgia Fire Academy in order to ensure a basic standardization of operations and philosophy; this requirement shall not be construed as limiting the training practices or requirements of any jurisdiction, as it is intended that the programs of the Georgia Fire Academy be used to supplement the training practices and requirements of member jurisdictions. The pact shall cooperate with other state and federal agencies and with civil defense authorities on all levels. The state fire marshal may render advice, recommendations, and assistance to a pact, upon

request. Members of a pact shall cooperate with the state fire marshal on matters relating to fire investigations and the enforcement of the arson statutes of the state.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 3.

25-6-5. Liabilities, privileges, and immunities of pacts, members, and personnel.

(a) There shall be no liability imposed by law on a pact or any member jurisdiction or its personnel for failure to respond for the purpose of extinguishing or controlling any fire or other immediate response emergency. This immunity is not exclusive of other similar immunities granted by statute or common law.

(b) Any firefighter or other person who is an employee or member of a jurisdiction of a pact while engaged in a duty or activity in connection with this chapter or pursuant to orders or instructions of his superiors, shall be entitled to all rights, privileges, exemptions, and immunities to which he would be entitled if the duty or activity were performed within that firefighter's or other person's home jurisdiction.

(c) The loss of men or equipment while in operation under a pact agreement shall be borne as if the loss occurred in the man's or equipment's home jurisdiction.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 5.

25-6-6. Appropriation of funds for pacts by member jurisdictions; receipt of gifts by pacts; entry into agreements with state and federal agencies by pacts.

Jurisdictions belonging to a pact may raise and appropriate money for the purpose of implementing and operating the pact. The pact may receive, hold, and use gifts, bequests, and devises, either outright or in trust, for purposes consistent with this chapter. A pact may enter into agreements with appropriate state and federal agencies to participate in programs which make assistance available to local fire departments.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR. Use beyond municipal limits of municipal equipment for extinguishment of fires, 122 A.L.R. 1158.

25-6-7. Joining of pacts by jurisdictions not having fire departments; withdrawal from pacts.

(a) Following the initial establishment of a pact, in accordance with procedures established in the bylaws of the pact, jurisdictions which do not have fire departments may join an established pact upon meeting such conditions as the board of directors may fix.

(b) Not less than 90 days after delivering written notice to an officer of the pact, a member jurisdiction may withdraw from a pact after a vote of its governing body. In the event the withdrawal of one or more jurisdictions reduces the number of members but two or more members remain, it is intended that the remaining members should continue with the operation of the pact.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 7; Ga. L. 1982, p. 955, §§ 3, 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations, Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 100.

25-6-8. Establishment of pact districts; joining of nonmember jurisdictions to pact districts.

(a) Pact districts shall be established along the boundaries of counties in which member jurisdictions of a pact are located.

(b) If a nonmember jurisdiction is located within the boundaries of an established pact, it must become a part of that pact should it desire to participate in mutual aid activities. If a county or counties without member jurisdictions are encircled by counties having members of a common pact, the jurisdictions in such county or counties must join the pact should they desire to participate in mutual aid activities. If a county which has no member jurisdictions borders with counties having members of different pacts, the jurisdictions within the county which desire to participate in mutual aid activities must:

(1) Join with one of the bordering pact counties, provided that jurisdictions in the same county shall not be permitted to become members of different pacts; or

(2) Organize a pact, provided two or more jurisdictions are involved, as set forth in Code Section 25-6-2.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 8; Ga. L. 1982, p. 955, §§ 1, 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations,

Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 100.

25-6-9. Merger of pact districts.

(a) Should the member jurisdictions of one or more pact districts desire to merge with another district, the merger may be accomplished in keeping with the intent of Code Section 25-6-8 and as agreed by the board of directors of the concerned pacts.

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as prohibiting communication or cooperation among various pact districts. The boards of directors of various pact districts are encouraged to establish agreements for emergency responses across district lines to fringe areas in the event of emergency and to establish communications to aid in solving problems common to the districts.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 9.

25-6-10. Continuation of operation of preexistent pacts.

Pacts in existence on July 4, 1976, are authorized to continue to operate under their articles of incorporation or organizational policy.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 11.

25-6-11. Penalty for violations of chapter.

Any member of the governing body of a jurisdiction or any other person who violates this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and may be prosecuted by the Attorney General.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 742, § 10.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations, Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 100.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 1 et seq.

CHAPTER 7

GEORGIA FIRE ACADEMY

Sec.		Sec.	
25-7-1.	Short title.	25-7-6.	Administrative assignment to Department of Public Safety; authority to accept gifts, grants, and donations.
25-7-2.	Creation; purposes.		
25-7-3.	"Board" defined.		
25-7-4.	Power and duties of Board of Public Safety; creation of advisory council.	25-7-7.	Georgia Fire Academy training programs.
25-7-5.	Responsibilities of superintendent of academy.	25-7-8.	Attendance and effect of training programs.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Membership in Employees' Retirement System of Georgia. — Employees of the Georgia Fire Academy are legally entitled to membership in the Employees' Retirement System of Georgia. 1983 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 83-24.

25-7-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Fire Academy Act."

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 1.

25-7-2. Creation; purposes.

There is created the Georgia Fire Academy, the purposes of which shall be, through training and research:

- (1) To reduce the costs in suffering and property loss resulting from fire;
- (2) To provide professional training to paid, volunteer, and other publicly or privately employed firefighters at a minimal cost to them and their employers;
- (3) To assist the state and its counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions and the officers thereof in the investigation and determination of the causes of fires;
- (4) To develop new methods of fire prevention and fire fighting;
- (5) To provide facilities for testing fire-fighting and prevention equipment; and
- (6) To assist the state and its counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions in the training and operations of fire department-related emergency medical services and rescue services.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 2; Ga. L. 2002, p. 660, § 4; Ga. L. 2002, p. 1259, § 11.

25-7-3. “Board” defined.

As used in this chapter, “board” means the Board of Public Safety.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 3; Ga. L. 1980, p. 431, § 1.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 431, § 1, effective July 1,

1980, abolished the Georgia Fire Academy Board. By the same law the General Assembly decreed that the Board of Public Safety replace any reference to the Georgia Fire Academy Board.

25-7-4. Power and duties of Board of Public Safety; creation of advisory council.

(a) The Board of Public Safety is authorized and empowered to establish, operate, and maintain the Georgia Fire Academy for the purposes enumerated in Code Section 25-7-2. The board is authorized and empowered to do all things and to take whatever action is necessary to accomplish these purposes, including, but not limited to, the establishment and conduct of training programs and the promulgation of rules and regulations relative thereto. The board shall select the superintendent of the academy and shall fix the compensation for the superintendent.

(b) The board is authorized and directed to create an advisory council to advise and assist it in carrying out its duties and responsibilities under this chapter. The membership of the advisory council shall be as the board determines, except that such membership shall include at least one representative from each of the following organizations: the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, the Georgia Municipal Association, and the Insurance Services Office. The director of the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council shall also be a member of the advisory council. The members of the advisory council shall serve without compensation, but they may be reimbursed in the same manner as state officials and employees for travel and other expenses actually incurred by them in carrying out their duties as members of the council.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 4; Ga. L. 1980, p. 431, § 2.

25-7-5. Responsibilities of superintendent of academy.

The superintendent of the Georgia Fire Academy shall be responsible for the selection of a staff. He shall also be responsible for the execution of all policies, programs, directives, and decisions promulgated by the

Board of Public Safety and for the direction of the staff and the daily operation of the academy.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 5.

25-7-6. Administrative assignment to Department of Public Safety; authority to accept gifts, grants, and donations.

(a) The Georgia Fire Academy is assigned to the Department of Public Safety for administrative purposes only, as described in Code Section 50-4-3.

(b) The Board of Public Safety is authorized to accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of carrying out this chapter. The board is also authorized to accept property, both real and personal, and services for the purposes of carrying out this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 6.

25-7-7. Georgia Fire Academy training programs.

Subject to the rules and regulations prescribed by the Board of Public Safety, the training program of the academy shall be made available to all firefighters and may also be made available to other persons who evidence interest in entering the fire-fighting profession. The board is authorized to prescribe fees to cover all or a part of the cost of furnishing the training, under such rules and regulations as the board shall prescribe. The state, municipalities, and counties are authorized to expend funds for the purpose of paying such fees. The board is given full authority to decide who shall be allowed to enroll in the training program of the academy.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 7.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Board of Public Safety is authorized to provide firefighting training to employees of firefighting organization. — Board of the Georgia Fire Academy (now Board of Public Safety) is autho-

rized to provide firefighting training to employees of a private, profit-making firefighting organization and to prescribe fees to cover all or a part of the cost of such training. 1979 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 79-43.

25-7-8. Attendance and effect of training programs.

It is not the intention of this chapter that it be mandatory that any firefighter be required to attend the academy. The training program established at the academy shall not supersede any training program

for firefighters now in existence or hereafter established but shall be separate and apart from any other training programs for firefighters.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 1725, § 8.

CHAPTER 8

**REGULATION OF BLASTING OPERATIONS
GENERALLY**

Sec.		Sec.	
25-8-1.	Short title.	25-8-9.	Promulgation of rules and regulations by Commissioner; forms.
25-8-2.	Definitions.		
25-8-3.	Requirements for use of explosives in blasting.	25-8-10.	Approval by Commissioner of variations from requirements of chapter.
25-8-4.	Blasting standards; formulas and table.	25-8-11.	Enforcement; additional penalties; privileged evidence.
25-8-5.	Use of seismograph measurements.	25-8-12.	Penalties for violations of chapter, rules, regulations, or orders.
25-8-6.	License requirement.		
25-8-7.	Refusal, suspension, or revocation of license.		
25-8-8.	Maintenance of blasting records.		

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Explosives and Blasting Agents, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of In-

surance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-10-.01 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Punitive damages precluded by compliance with regulations. — Punitive damages are, as a general rule, improper when a defendant has complied with environmental and safety regulations. Accordingly, the award of punitive

damages against a quarry operator who had adhered to the applicable laws was not supported by the evidence and warranted reversal. *Stone Man, Inc. v. Green*, 263 Ga. 470, 435 S.E.2d 205, 1993 Ga. LEXIS 686 (1993).

25-8-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Blasting Standards Act of 1978.”

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

10A Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms, Explosions and Explosives, § 2.

25-8-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Blaster” means a person qualified by reason of training, knowledge, or experience to fire or detonate explosives in blasting operations and who has in his possession a valid blaster’s license issued by the Commissioner.

(2) “Blasting operation” means the use of explosives in the blasting of stone, rock, ore, or any other natural formation or in any construction or demolition work but shall not include the use of explosives in agricultural operations and private and personal use of explosives in remote areas for such operations as ditching, land clearing, destruction of beaver dams and other such operations when not in close proximity to adjacent property. This chapter shall not apply to any blasting operation in which the charge weight is 200 pounds or less.

(3) “Charge weight” means the total weight in pounds of an explosive charge.

(4) “Charge weight per delay” means the weight in pounds of an explosive charge which is detonated per delay period for delay intervals of eight milliseconds or greater or the total weight of explosives in pounds which is detonated within an interval less than eight milliseconds.

(5) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(6) “Delay initiation” means the detonation of the subcharge of explosives in predetermined sequence which is accomplished by using regular or short period delay electric blasting caps or other means of equivalent effectiveness.

(7) “Delay period” means the time interval in milliseconds (eight milliseconds or greater) between successive detonations of subchargers produced by the delay devices used.

(8) “Distance” means the actual distance in feet along ground contour to the nearest house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied.

(9) “Explosives” means any chemical compound or other substance or mechanical system intended for the purpose of producing an explosion or containing oxidizing and combustible units or other ingredients in such proportions or quantities that ignition by fire, by friction, by concussion, by percussion, or by detonator may produce an explosion capable of causing injury to persons or damage to property.

(10) “Particle velocity” means the velocity with which an earth particle moves when vibrating or oscillating in any manner from its position of rest or elastic equilibrium.

(11) “Person” means any individual, public or private corporation, political subdivision, government agency, municipality, industry, partnership, association, firm, trust, estate, or other entity whatsoever.

(12) “Scaled distance” or “Ds” means the actual distance (D) in feet divided by the square root of the maximum charge weight (W) in pounds that is detonated per delay period. This means:

$$Ds = \frac{D}{\sqrt{W}}$$

$$\text{Scaled distance} = \frac{\text{Actual distance}}{\sqrt{\text{charge weight per delay interval}}}$$

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 2; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25.

25-8-3. Requirements for use of explosives in blasting.

(a) The use of explosives for the purpose of blasting in the neighborhood of any public highway, railroad, airport, dwelling house, public building, school, church, commercial or institutional building, or pipeline shall be done in accordance with this chapter and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner.

(b) In all blasting operations, except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the maximum particle velocity of any component of ground motion recorded on a three-component seismograph (where the components — transverse, vertical, and longitudinal — are arranged mutually perpendicular) shall not exceed two inches per second at the location of any dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied.

(c) Blasting operations without instrumentation will be considered as being within the limits set forth in this Code section if such blasting operations are conducted in accordance with subsection (d) of this Code section.

(d) Any blasting operation may be conducted without reference to any maximum amount or period provided by this Code section if the person in charge of the blasting operation demonstrates by instrumen-

tation that maximum particle velocity of any component of the ground motion does not exceed the limits provided in subsection (b) of this Code section.

(e) Instrumentation for determining particle velocity of ground motion, as set forth in this chapter, shall be limited to devices that conform with design criteria for portable seismographs as found in the United States Bureau of Mines, RI-6487 and United States Bureau of Mines Bulletin 656. The instrument should have calibration traceable to the United States Bureau of Standards. The Commissioner or his duly authorized agent may enter upon premises for the purpose of observing any necessary instrumentation provided by this chapter.

(f) When blasting operations, other than those conducted at a fixed site as a part of any industry or business operated at the site, are to be conducted within close proximity to a known pipeline, the blaster or person in charge of the blasting operations shall take reasonable precautionary measures for the protection of the line and shall notify the owner of the line or his agent that the blastings are intended.

(g) Blasting operations shall not be conducted within close proximity to any public highway unless reasonable precautionary measures are taken to safeguard the public.

(h) When blasting operations are conducted at the immediate location of any dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building which would result in ground vibrations having a particle velocity exceeding the limits provided by this chapter, such blasting operations may proceed after the receipt of written consent from the property owner or owners affected.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability for property damage by concussion from blasting, 20 A.L.R.2d 1372.

25-8-4. Blasting standards; formulas and table.

(a) In all blasting operations, except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the maximum peak particle velocity of any component of ground motion recorded on a three-component seismograph (where the components — transverse, vertical, and longitudinal — are arranged mutually perpendicular) shall not exceed two inches per second at the location of any dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied.

(b) For blast-to-structure distance greater than 300 feet, the standard table for maximum charge per delay shall be generated by the formula:

$$W = \left(\frac{D}{50} \right)^2$$

where W is the weight of explosive in pounds and D is the distance in feet to the nearest dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied.

(c) The following table may be used for determining the weight of explosives to be used with a single delay period:

STANDARD TABLE OF DISTANCE

Distance in Feet	Weight in Pounds	Distance in Feet	Weight in Pounds
0-10	1/8	350	49
11-15	1/4	400	64
16-20	1/2	500	100
21-25	3/4	600	144
26-30	1.00	700	196
40	2.25	800	256
50	3.50	900	324
60	4.75	1000	400
70	6.00	1100	484
80	7.25	1200	576
90	8.50	1300	676
100	9.75	1400	784
110	11.0	1500	900
130	13.5	1600	1024
150	16.0	1700	1156
170	18.5	1800	1296
190	21.0	1900	1444
210	23.5	2000	1600
230	26.0	2500	2500
250	28.5	3000	3600
270	31.0	3500	4900
290	33.5	4000	6400
300	34.75	4500	8100

(d) For nontabulated distances of over 300 feet, the following formula shall be used:

$$\text{Weight} = \left(\frac{\text{Distance}}{50} \right)^2$$

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 4.

25-8-5. Use of seismograph measurements.

(a) Seismograph measurements may be used to increase the charge weight per delay period, provided that the velocity limit of two inches per second of any of the three mutually perpendicular components of ground motion is not exceeded.

(b) Seismograph measurements must be used in each individual blasting operation in which the standard table of distance is not being complied with. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a modified table for blasting operations may be established for use at a particular site, provided that the velocity limit of two inches per second of any of the three mutually perpendicular components of ground motion is not exceeded. Blasting operations without instrumentation will be considered as being within the limits set forth in this subsection if, at a specified location on at least five blasts, instrumentation has shown that the maximum peak particle velocity of any of the three mutually perpendicular components of ground motion at the specified location is 50 percent or less than the limit set forth in this subsection, provided that on all future blasts the scaled distance is equal to or greater than the scaled distance for the instrumented blast.

(c) In estimating the maximum peak particle velocity at a particular position, the following formula shall be used:

$$V = V_o \left(\frac{D_o}{D} \right)^{1.5}$$

where V_o is the maximum ground particle velocity at the seismograph, D_o is the distance of the seismograph from the blasting, and D is the distance from the blasting to the position in question and in the same general direction. The distance D_o may not be greater than D , and D cannot be more than five times D_o . This determined velocity at the site of any dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied shall not exceed the two inches per second limit.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 5.

25-8-6. License requirement.

Every person engaged in any use of explosives regulated by this chapter shall be licensed in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 25-2-17.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 6; Ga. L. 1994, p. 728, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 1 et seq.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 41 et seq.

25-8-7. Refusal, suspension, or revocation of license.

Issuance of a license for the use of explosives may be refused or such a license which has been duly issued may be suspended or revoked or the renewal thereof refused by the Commissioner if the Commissioner finds that the applicant for or the holder of the license:

- (1) Has violated any provision of this chapter or of any other law of this state or any regulation duly promulgated by the Commissioner;
- (2) Has intentionally misrepresented or concealed any material fact in the application for the license or any document filed in support thereof;
- (3) Has permitted any person in his or her employ, either by direct instruction or by reasonable implication, to violate this chapter;
- (4) Has been convicted of a felony by final judgment in any state or federal court;
- (5) Has failed to comply with or has violated any proper order, rule, or regulation issued by the Commissioner; or
- (6) Has otherwise shown a lack of trustworthiness or lack of competence to act as a blaster.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 7; Ga. L. 1994, p. 728, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits,
§§ 50 et seq., 56.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 135 et seq.

25-8-8. Maintenance of blasting records.

(a) A record of each blast shall be kept. All records, including seismograph reports, shall be retained at least three years and shall be available for inspection.

(b) All records kept pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall contain the following minimum data:

- (1) The name of the company or contractor;
- (2) The location, date, and time of the blast;
- (3) The name, signature, and license number of the blaster in charge;
- (4) The type of material blasted;
- (5) The number of holes, burden, and spacing;
- (6) The diameter and depth of holes;
- (7) The types of explosives used (trade name);
- (8) The total weight of explosives used;
- (9) The maximum weight of explosives and maximum number of holes per delay interval of eight milliseconds or greater;
- (10) The method of firing;
- (11) The direction and distance in feet to the nearest dwelling house, public building, school, church, or commercial or institutional building normally occupied, neither owned nor leased by the person conducting the blasting;
- (12) The weather conditions;
- (13) The type and height or length of stemming;
- (14) The type of delay blasting caps used and the delay periods used (trade name); and
- (15) Whether or not mats or other forms of protection were used.

(c) The person taking the seismograph reading shall accurately indicate:

- (1) The location of each seismograph used and its distance from the blast;

(2) The name of the person and firm, if any, analyzing the seismograph record;

(3) The name of the person operating the seismograph; and

(4) The exact location of blast relative to grid, station number, or permanent location.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to make a false entry in any record required to be kept pursuant to this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 8.

25-8-9. Promulgation of rules and regulations by Commissioner; forms.

The Commissioner may promulgate such rules and regulations, neither inconsistent nor contradictory with this chapter, as he deems necessary to effectuate this chapter. The Commissioner may also prescribe the forms required for the administration of this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 9.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Explosives and Blasting Agents, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State

of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-10-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 12 et seq.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 4 et seq.

25-8-10. Approval by Commissioner of variations from requirements of chapter.

The Commissioner may approve variations from the requirements of this chapter when he finds that an emergency exists and that the proposed variations from the specific requirements are necessary, will not hinder the effective administration of this chapter, and will not be contrary to any other applicable law, either state or federal.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 10.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

2 Am. Jur. 2d, Administrative Law, § 65. 73 Am. Jur. 2d, Statutes, § 255.

25-8-11. Enforcement; additional penalties; privileged evidence.

(a) Whenever it appears to the Commissioner, either upon investigation or otherwise, that any person has engaged in, is engaging in, or is about to engage in any act, practice, or transaction which is prohibited by this chapter or by any rule, regulation, or order of the Commissioner promulgated or issued pursuant to this chapter or which is declared to be unlawful under this chapter, the Commissioner, in his discretion and if he deems it to be appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of the citizens of this state, may issue an order prohibiting the person from continuing the act, practice, or transaction.

(b) Other powers granted to the Commissioner for the enforcement of this chapter include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) The Commissioner may institute actions or other legal proceedings in any superior court of proper venue. Thereupon, the superior court, among other appropriate relief, may issue injunctions restraining persons and those acting in active concert with them from engaging in acts prohibited by the Commissioner in the enforcement of this chapter;

(2) In addition to any other penalties provided in this chapter, the Commissioner shall have authority to place a licensee on probation for a period of time not to exceed one year or to impose a monetary fine of up to \$1,000.00, or to do both, for each and every violation of this chapter or of the rules and regulations or orders of the Commissioner promulgated pursuant thereto; and

(3) The Commissioner or his designee shall have investigatorial powers and shall be empowered to subpoena witnesses and to examine them under oath.

(c) All testimony, documents, and other evidence required to be submitted to the Commissioner pursuant to this chapter shall be privileged.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 11.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 221 et seq.

C.J.S.

67 C.J.S., Officers and Public Employees, § 323 et seq.

ALR.

Liability for property damage by concussion from blasting, 20 A.L.R.2d 1372.

Absolute liability for blasting opera-

tions as extending to injury or damage not directly caused by debris or concussion from explosion, 56 A.L.R.3d 1017.

25-8-12. Penalties for violations of chapter, rules, regulations, or orders.

Any person who violates this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order promulgated by the Commissioner pursuant to this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$500.00 and not more than \$1,000.00.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1624, § 12.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

56 Am. Jur. 2d, Municipal Corporations, Counties, and Other Political Subdivisions, § 100.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 61 et seq.

ALR.

Liability for property damage by concussion from blasting, 20 A.L.R.2d 1372.

CHAPTER 9

BLASTING OR EXCAVATING NEAR UNDERGROUND FACILITIES

Sec.		Sec.	
25-9-1.	Short title.	25-9-10.	Effect of chapter upon rights, titles, powers, or interests of facility owners or operators.
25-9-2.	Purpose of chapter.	25-9-10.1.	Cooperation with the Department of Transportation.
25-9-3.	Definitions.	25-9-11.	Effect of chapter in relation to public road or street right of way.
25-9-4.	Design locate request and response.	25-9-11.1.	Prohibition of local governing authorities from enforcing local ordinances or resolutions relating to certain marking or location requirements.
25-9-5.	Cooperation with UPC; permanent markers for water and sewer facilities; accurate placement; point of contact list.	25-9-12.	Notice requirements for emergency excavations.
25-9-6.	Prerequisites to blasting or excavating; marking of sites.	25-9-13.	Notice requirements for nonemergency excavations in an area declared to have extraordinary circumstances.
25-9-7.	Determining presence of underground facilities and sewer laterals.	25-9-14.	Strict liability; bond authorization; civil penalties; advisory committee.
25-9-8.	Treatment of underground facilities by blasters and excavators; emergency notifications.		
25-9-9.	Degree of accuracy required in underground facility location information; liability due to inaccurate, lack of, or delayed communication of location information.		

Cross references.

Distribution, storage, and sale of gas generally, § 46-4-1 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Enforcement Procedures under the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Public Service Commission, Safe Installation and Operation of Natural Gas

Transmission and Distribution Systems, Rule 515-9-4-.01 et seq.

Emergency Procedures, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Public Service Commission, Safe Installation and Operation of Natural Gas Transmission and Distribution Systems, Procedures Required under the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act, Rule 515-9-5-.01.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of one excavating on private

property for injury to public utility cables, conduits, or the like, 28 A.L.R.5th 603.

25-9-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Underground Facility Protection Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-1, enacted by Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “Underground” for “Utility”.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1, effective July 1, 2000, renumbered former Code Section 25-9-1 as present Code Section 25-9-2.

Law reviews.

For annual survey of administrative law, see 56 Mercer L. Rev. 31 (2004).

25-9-2. Purpose of chapter.

The purpose of this chapter is to protect the public from physical harm, prevent injury to persons and property, and prevent interruptions of service resulting from damage to underground facilities and sewer laterals caused by blasting or excavating operations by providing a method whereby the location of underground facilities and sewer laterals will be made known to persons planning to engage in blasting or excavating operations so that such persons may observe proper precautions with respect to such underground facilities and sewer laterals.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-9-2, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 1/SB 274; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, deleted “utility” preceding

“service” and substituted “underground facilities” for “utility facilities” three times.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1, effective July 1, 2000, renumbered former Code Section 25-9-2 as present Code Section 25-9-3.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Provisions of Ga. L. 1969, p. 50 (see now O.C.G.A. Title 25, Chapter 9) do not apply to the State Highway Depart-

ment (now Department of Transportation). 1969 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 69-390.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

61 Am. Jur. 2d, Pipelines, §§ 30, 31.

C.J.S.

58 C.J.S., Mines and Minerals, § 533 et seq.

25-9-3. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) "Abandoned underground facility" means an underground facility taken out of service by a facility owner or operator on or after January 1, 2001.

(2) "Appropriate notice" means a notice period that:

(A) Is associated with an effective date;

(B) Begins at 7:00 A.M. on the first business day following receipt by the UPC of a locate request submitted in compliance with Code Section 25-9-6; and

(C) Ends at 7:00 A.M. on the business day immediately following a period of time that is not:

(i) Less than two business days; or

(ii) More than eight business days.

(3) "Betterments" means any upgrading of the underground facility being repaired made solely for the benefit of and at the election of the facility owner or operator and not attributable to the damage.

(4) "Blasting" means any operation by which the level or grade of land is changed or by which earth, rock, buildings, structures, or other masses or materials are rended, torn, demolished, moved, or removed by the detonation of dynamite or any other explosive agent.

(5) "Business days" means Monday through Friday, excluding the following holidays: New Year's Day, Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Any such holiday that falls on a Saturday shall be observed on the preceding Friday. Any such holiday that falls on a Sunday shall be observed on the following Monday. If Christmas Eve falls on a Friday, it shall be observed on the preceding Thursday. If Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, it shall be observed on the following Tuesday.

(6) "Business hours" means the time from 7:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. local time on business days.

(7) "Commission" means the Public Service Commission.

(8) "Corporation" means any corporation; municipal corporation; county; authority; joint-stock company; partnership; association; business trust; cooperative; organized group of persons, whether incorporated or not; or receiver or receivers or trustee or trustees of any of the foregoing.

(9) "Damage" means any impact or exposure that results in the need to repair an underground facility or sewer lateral due to the weakening or the partial or complete destruction of the facility or

sewer lateral including, but not limited to, the protective coating, lateral support, cathodic protection, or the housing for the line, device, sewer lateral, or facility.

(10) “Design locate request” means a communication to the UPC in which a request for locating existing underground facilities for bidding, predesign, or advance planning purposes is made.

(11) “Designate” means to stake or mark on the surface of the tract or parcel of land the location of an underground facility or sewer lateral.

(12) “Effective date” means the calendar day on which blasting or excavating is anticipated to begin as indicated by the excavator in the locate request.

(13) “Emergency” means a sudden or unforeseen occurrence involving a clear and imminent danger to life, health, or property; the interruption of underground services; or repairs to transportation facilities that require immediate action.

(14) “Emergency 9-1-1 call” means using the digits, address, internet protocol address, or other information to access or initiate contact with a public safety answering point.

(15)(A) “Excavating” means any operation using mechanized equipment or explosives to move earth, rock, or other material below existing grade. Such term shall include, but shall not be limited to, augering, blasting, boring, digging, ditching, dredging, drilling, driving-in, grading, plowing-in, ripping, scraping, trenching, and tunneling.

(B) Such term shall not include:

(i) Farming activities;

(ii) Milling or pavement repair that does not exceed the depth of the existing pavement or 12 inches, whichever is less; or

(iii) Routine road maintenance or railroad maintenance activities carried out by road maintenance or railroad employees or contractors, provided that such activities:

(I) Occur entirely within the right of way of a public road, street, railroad, or highway of the state;

(II) Are carried out with reasonable care so as to protect any underground facilities and sewer laterals placed in the right of way by permit; are carried out within the limits of any original excavation on the traveled way, shoulders, or drainage ditches of a public road, street, railroad, or highway, and do not exceed

18 inches in depth below the grade existing prior to such activities; and

(III) If involving the replacement of existing guard rails and sign posts, replace such guard rails and sign posts in their previous locations and at their previous depth.

(16) “Excavator” means any person engaged in blasting or excavating.

(17) “Extraordinary circumstances” means circumstances other than normal operating conditions which exist making it impractical or impossible for a facility owner or operator to comply with the provisions of this chapter. Such extraordinary circumstances may include, but shall not be limited to, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, ice and snow, and other acts of God.

(18) “Facility owner or operator” means any person or entity with the sole exception of a homeowner that owns, operates, or controls the operation of an underground facility.

(19) “Farming activities” means the tilling of the fields related to agricultural activities but shall not include other types of mechanized excavating on a farm.

(20) “Horizontal directional drilling” or “HDD” means a type of trenchless excavation that uses guidable boring equipment to excavate in an essentially horizontal plane without disturbing or with minimal disturbance to the ground surface.

(21) “Large project” means an excavation that involves more work to locate underground facilities than can reasonably be completed within the requirements of subsection (a) of Code Section 25-9-7.

(22) “Local governing authority” means:

(A) A county, municipality, or local authority created by or pursuant to a general, local, or special Act of the General Assembly, or by the Constitution of the State of Georgia; and

(B) Any local authority that is created or activated by an appropriate ordinance or resolution of the governing body of a county or municipality individually or jointly with other political subdivisions of this state.

(23) “Locate request” means a communication between an excavator and the UPC in which a request for designating underground facilities, sewer laterals, or both is processed.

(24) “Locator” means a person that is acting on behalf of facility owners and operators in designating the location of the underground facilities and sewer laterals of such owners and operators.

(25) “Mechanized excavating equipment” means all equipment powered by any motor, engine, or hydraulic or pneumatic device which is used for excavating.

(26) “Milling” means the process of grinding asphaltic concrete.

(27) “Minimally intrusive excavation methods” means methods of excavation that minimize the potential for damage to underground facilities and sewer laterals. Such term shall include, but shall not be limited to, air entrainment/vacuum extraction systems and water jet/vacuum excavation systems operated by qualified personnel and careful hand tool usage and other methods as determined by the commission. Such term shall not include the use of trenchless excavation.

(28) “Notice period” means the period of time during which the designation of underground facilities or sewer laterals, or both, is supposed to occur in accordance with this chapter.

(29) “Permanent marker” means a visible indication of the approximate location of an underground facility or sewer lateral that can reasonably be expected to remain in position for the life of the facility. Such term shall include, but shall not be limited to, sewer cleanouts; water meter boxes; and etching, cutting, or attaching medallions or other industry accepted surface markers to curbing, pavement, or other similar visible fixed surfaces.

(30) “Person” means an individual, firm, joint venture, partnership, association, local governing authority, state, or other governmental unit, authority, department, agency, or a corporation and shall include any trustee, receiver, assignee, employee, agent, or personal representative thereof.

(31) “Positive response information system” or “PRIS” means the automated information system operated and maintained by the UPC at its location that allows excavators, locators, facility owners or operators, and other affected parties to determine the status of a locate request or a design locate request.

(32) “Public safety answering point” shall have the same meaning as provided in Code Section 46-5-122.

(33) “Routine road maintenance” means work that is planned and performed on a routine basis to maintain and preserve the condition of the public road system and includes routine road surface scraping, mowing grass, animal removal, cleaning of inlets and culverts, trash removal, striping and striping removal, and cutting of trees; however, stump removal shall be considered excavation.

(34) “Sewer lateral” means an individual customer service line

which transports waste water from one or more building units to an underground sewer facility.

(35) “Sewer system owner or operator” means the owner or operator of a sewer system. Sewer systems shall be considered to extend to the connection to the customer’s facilities.

(36) “Tolerance zone” means the width of the underground facility or sewer lateral plus 18 inches on either side of the outside edge of the underground facility or sewer lateral on a horizontal plane.

(37) “Traffic control devices” means all electronic or electrically powered roadway signs, sign structures, or signals of a local governing authority or the Department of Transportation and all associated underground infrastructure on which the public relies for informational, regulatory, or warning messages concerning the public rights of way.

(38) “Traffic management system” means a network of traffic control devices, monitoring sensors, and personnel of a local governing authority or the Department of Transportation, with all associated communications and power services, including all system control and management centers.

(39) “Trenchless excavation” means a method of excavation that uses boring equipment to excavate with minimal or no disturbance to the ground surface. Such term shall include HDD.

(40) “Underground facility” means an underground or submerged fiber, conductor, pipe, or structure used or installed for use in providing traffic control, traffic management, electric service, or communications service, or in carrying, providing, or gathering gas, oil or oil products, sewage, waste water, storm drainage, or water or other liquids. All underground facilities shall be considered to extend up to the connection to the customer’s facilities. Such term shall not include sewer laterals or publicly or privately owned railroad facilities.

(41) “Unlocatable facility” means an underground facility that cannot be marked with reasonable accuracy using generally accepted techniques or equipment commonly used to designate underground facilities and sewer laterals. Such term shall include, but shall not be limited to, nonconductive underground facilities and sewer laterals and nonmetallic underground facilities that have no trace wires or records that indicate a specific location.

(42) “Utilities Protection Center” or “UPC” means the corporation or other organization formed by facility owners or operators to provide a joint notification service for the purpose of receiving advance notification from persons planning to blast or excavate and

distributing such notifications to its affected facility owner or operator members.

(43) “White lining” means marking the route of the excavation either electronically or with white paint, flags, stakes, or a combination of such methods to outline the dig site prior to notifying the UPC and before the locator arrives on the job.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 2; Ga. L. 1970, p. 226, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1978, p. 1659, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 1577, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 515, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 177, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-9-3, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 2/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 1/SB 117; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, rewrote this Code section.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2005, paragraphs (33) and (34) were redesignated as paragraphs (34) and (35), respectively.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2005, paragraph (33), as enacted by Ga. L.

2003, p. 813, was redesignated as paragraph (34) and paragraph (34), as enacted by Ga. L. 2003, p. 813, was redesignated as paragraph (35).

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2022, the definitions of “traffic management system” and “tolerance zone” were redesignated into alphabetical order.

Editor’s notes.

Former Code Section 25-9-3, concerning the requirement that utilities with gas pipes or underground facilities file information with superior court clerks, was repealed and reserved by Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1, effective April 4, 1990, and was based on Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 3; Ga. L. 1975, p. 417, § 1; Ga. L. 1981, Ex. Sess., p. 8 (Code enactment Act); and Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Violations. — When an asphalt company admitted that the company had been “scraping” a site where a telephone cable was severed, and telephone company employees testified it appeared that there had been digging at the site where the cable was severed, the evidence was sufficient to support the Georgia Public Service Commission’s conclusion that the company violated the Georgia Utility Fa-

cility Protection Act, (now the Georgia Underground Facility Protection Act) O.C.G.A. § 25-9-1 et seq., by not contacting the utilities protection center to locate buried utilities before the company began work, because the company was engaged in “excavating,” as defined by O.C.G.A. § 25-9-3. *Douglas Asphalt Co. v. Ga. PSC*, 263 Ga. App. 711, 589 S.E.2d 292, 2003 Ga. App. LEXIS 1295 (2003).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Provisions of Ga. L. 1969, p. 50 (see now O.C.G.A. Title 25, Chapter 9) do not apply to the State Highway Depart-

ment (now Department of Transportation). 1969 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 69-390.

25-9-4. Design locate request and response.

(a) Any person may submit a design locate request to the UPC. Such design locate request shall:

(1) Describe the tract or parcel of land for which the design locate

request has been submitted with sufficient particularity, as defined by policies developed and promulgated by the UPC, to enable the facility owner or operator to ascertain the precise tract or parcel of land involved; and

(2) State the name, address, and telephone number of the person that has submitted the design locate request, as well as the name, address, and telephone number of any other person authorized to review any records subject to inspection as provided in subparagraph (b)(2)(B) of this Code section.

(b) Within ten business days after a design locate request has been submitted to the UPC for a proposed project, the facility owner or operator shall respond to the person calling in the design locate request under the guidelines listed below:

(1) For single address requests, designate or cause to be designated by a locator in accordance with Code Sections 25-9-7 and 25-9-9 the location of all underground facilities and sewer laterals within the area of the proposed excavation; or

(2) For multiple address requests:

(A) Provide the person submitting the design locate request the best available description of all underground facilities and sewer laterals in the area of proposed excavation, which might include drawings of underground facilities and sewer laterals already built in the area, or other facility records that are maintained by the facility owner or operator; or

(B) Allow the person submitting the design locate request or any other authorized person to inspect or copy the drawings or other records for all underground facilities and sewer laterals within the proposed area of excavation.

(c) Upon responding using any of the methods provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, the facility owner or operator shall provide the response to the UPC in accordance with UPC procedures.

(d) A design locate request shall not be used for excavation purposes.

(e) A design locate request shall not be required as a condition for approving a utility permit application.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-4, enacted by Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 3/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 2/SB 117; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “that” for “who” in paragraph (a)(2); in the introduc-

tory language of subsection (b), substituted “business” for “working”, substituted “respond to” for “respond by the method requested by”, and added “under the guidelines listed below” at the end; in paragraph (b)(1), substituted “For single address requests, designate” for “Designate” at the beginning and added “or” at

the end; redesignated former paragraphs (b)(2) and (b)(3) as present subparagraphs (b)(2)(A) and (b)(2)(B), respectively; added “For multiple address requests:” as the introductory language of paragraph (b)(2); substituted “underground” for “utility” in paragraph (b)(1), twice in subparagraph (b)(2)(A), and in subparagraph (b)(2)(B); and added subsection (e).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

2022, “subparagraph (b)(2)(B) of this Code section” was substituted for “paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of this Code section” near the end of paragraph (a)(2).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1, effective July 1, 2000, renumbered former Code Section 25-9-4 as present Code Section 25-9-5, and enacted this Code section.

25-9-5. Cooperation with UPC; permanent markers for water and sewer facilities; accurate placement; point of contact list.

(a) Except as otherwise provided by subsection (b) of this Code section, all facility owners or operators operating or maintaining underground facilities within the state shall participate as members in and cooperate with the UPC. No duplicative center shall be established. The activities of the UPC shall be funded by all facility owners or operators.

(b) Persons that install water and sewer facilities or that own such facilities until those facilities are accepted by a local governing authority or other entity are not required to participate as members of the UPC and shall not be considered facility owners or operators. All such persons shall install and maintain permanent markers identifying all water and sewer facilities at the time of the facility installation. Notwithstanding the above, all owners or operators of water and sewer facilities that provide service from such facilities shall be considered facility owners or operators and shall be members of the UPC.

(c) All permanent markers other than sewer cleanouts, water meter boxes, or any other visible components of an underground facility that establish the exact location of the underground facility shall be placed accurately in accordance with Code Section 25-9-9 and shall be located within the public right of way. Sewer cleanouts, water meter boxes, or any other visible components of an underground facility that establish the exact location of the underground facility shall be located within ten feet of the public right of way to be considered a permanent marker.

(d) The UPC shall maintain a list of the name, address, and telephone number of the office, department, or other source from or through which information as to the location of underground facilities of its participating facility owners or operators may be obtained during business hours on business days.

History.

1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-9-4, enacted by Ga. L. § 1; Code 1981, § 25-9-5, as redesignated

by Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 4/SB 274; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” in subsection (a); in subsection (b), substituted “that” for “who” twice in the first sentence, deleted “, as defined in Code Section 25-9-3,” following “markers” in the second sentence, and substituted “shall be” for “are” in the third sentence; added subsection (c); redesignated former subsection (c) as present

subsection (d); and substituted “as to the location of underground” for “respecting the location of utility” in subsection (d).

Editor’s notes.

Former Code Section 25-9-5, concerning duties of the superior court clerks and filing fees, was repealed and reserved by Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1, effective April 4, 1990, and was based on Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 4; Ga. L. 1975, p. 417, § 2; Ga. L. 1981, p. 1396, § 16; Ga. L. 1981, Ex. Sess., p. 8 (Code enactment Act); § 25-9-5, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1.

25-9-6. Prerequisites to blasting or excavating; marking of sites.

(a) No person shall commence, perform, or engage in blasting or in excavating with mechanized excavating equipment on any tract or parcel of land in any county in this state unless and until the person planning the blasting or excavating has submitted a locate request to the UPC that provides appropriate notice. Any person performing excavation is responsible for being aware of all information timely entered into the PRIS prior to the commencement of excavation. If, prior to the expiration of the appropriate notice period, all identified facility owners or operators have responded to the locate request, and if all such facility owners or operators have indicated that their facilities either are not in conflict or have been marked, then the person planning to perform blasting or excavating shall be authorized to commence work, subject to the other requirements of this Code section, without waiting until the end of the notice period. No appropriate notice shall be required for excavating where minimally intrusive excavation methods are used exclusively. Any locate request received by the UPC after business hours shall be deemed to have been received by the UPC the next business day. Such locate request shall:

(1) Describe the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavating is to take place with sufficient particularity, as defined by policies developed and promulgated by the UPC, to enable the facility owner or operator to ascertain the precise tract or parcel of land involved;

(2) State the name, address, and telephone number of the person that will engage in the blasting or excavating;

(3) Describe the type of blasting or excavating to be engaged in by the person;

(4) Specify an effective date for the requested blasting or excavating and the duration of time in which such blasting or excavating is expected to take place; and

(5) Provide appropriate notice.

(b) In the event the location upon which the blasting or excavating is to take place cannot be described with sufficient particularity to enable the facility owner or operator to ascertain the precise tract or parcel involved, the person proposing the blasting or excavating shall mark the route or boundary of the site of the proposed blasting or excavating by means of white lining, as practical, or schedule an on-site meeting with the locator or facility owner or operator and inform the UPC, within a reasonable time, of the results of such meeting. The person marking a site using white lining shall comply with the rules and regulations of the Department of Transportation as to the use of such markings so as not to obstruct signs, pavement markings, pavement, or other safety devices.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, no blasting or excavating undertaken pursuant to a locate request shall take place more than 30 calendar days after the effective date. In the event that the blasting or excavating that is the subject of a locate request submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section will not be completed within 30 calendar days following the effective date of such locate request, an additional locate request with appropriate notice must be submitted to the UPC. Additional appropriate notices for an existing locate request shall not expand the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavation is to take place.

(d) For emergencies, no blasting or excavating shall take place after 7:00 A.M. on the third business day after the locate request is submitted to the UPC.

(e) Except for those persons submitting design locate requests, no person, including any facility owner or operator, shall request marking of a site through the UPC unless excavating is scheduled to commence. In addition, no person shall make repeated requests for re-marking, unless the repeated request is required for excavating to continue or due to circumstances not reasonably within the control of such person. Any person that willfully fails to comply with this subsection shall be liable to the facility owner or operator for \$100.00 or for actual costs, whichever is greater, for each repeated request for re-marking.

(f) If, subsequent to submitting a locate request to the UPC required by subsection (a) of this Code section, a person planning excavating determines that such work will require blasting, then such person shall promptly so notify the UPC and shall refrain from any blasting until the facility owner or operator responds within 48 hours, excluding hours during days other than business days, following receipt by the UPC of such notification.

(g) When a locate request is made in accordance with subsection (a) of this Code section, excavators other than the person planning the

blasting or excavating may conduct such activity, provided that the person planning the blasting or excavating shall remain responsible for ensuring that any stakes or other markings placed in accordance with this chapter remain in place and reasonably visible until such blasting or excavating is completed; and provided, further, that such blasting or excavating is:

(1) Performed on the tract or parcel of land identified in the locate request;

(2) Performed by a person authorized by and having a contractual relationship with the person planning the blasting or excavating;

(3) The type of blasting or excavating described in the locate request; and

(4) Carried out in accordance with all other requirements of this chapter.

(h) Facility owners or operators may bill an excavator for their costs related to any requests for re-marking other than for re-marks with no more than five individual addresses on a single locate request. Such costs shall be documented actual costs and shall not exceed \$100.00 per re-mark request.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 5; Ga. L. 1975, p. 417, § 3; Code 1981, § 25-9-5 [repealed]; Code 1981, § 25-9-6, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 5/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 3/SB 117; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90; Ga. L. 2016, p. 239, § 1/SB 191; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, rewrote subsection (a); in subsection (b), substituted “lining, as” for “paint, white stakes, or white flags if” in the first sentence and “using” for “with” in the second sentence; rewrote subsections (c) and (d); in subsection (e), substituted “any facility owner or operator” for “facility owners or operators” in the first sen-

tence and “that” for “who” in the third sentence; in subsection (f), substituted “submitting a locate request” for “giving the notice”, substituted “48 hours” for “24 hours”, and substituted “notification” for “notice” at the end; and substituted “for their costs related to” for “their costs for” in the first sentence of subsection (h).

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for a gas company’s duties upon being notified of proposed blasting or excavating. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-7.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-5 as this Code section.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Violations. — When an asphalt company admitted that the company had been “scraping” a site where a telephone cable was severed, and telephone company employees testified it appeared that there had been digging at the site where the

cable was severed, the evidence was sufficient to support the Georgia Public Service Commission’s conclusion that the company violated the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act (now the Georgia Underground Facility Protection Act),

O.C.G.A. § 25-9-1 et seq., by not contacting the utilities protection center to locate buried utilities before the company began

work. *Douglas Asphalt Co. v. Ga. PSC*, 263 Ga. App. 711, 589 S.E.2d 292, 2003 Ga. App. LEXIS 1295 (2003).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 63 et seq.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 41 et seq.

ALR.

Liability for property damage by concussion from blasting, 20 A.L.R.2d 1372.

Liability of excavator for injury or damage resulting from explosion or fire caused

by his damaging of gas mains and pipes, 53 A.L.R.2d 1083.

Liability of gas company for damage resulting from failure to inspect or supervise work of contractors digging near gas pipes, 71 A.L.R.3d 1174.

Liability of one excavating in highway for injury to public utility cables, conduits, or the like, 73 A.L.R.3d 987.

25-9-7. Determining presence of underground facilities and sewer laterals.

(a)(1) Prior to 7:00 A.M. on the effective date, each facility owner or operator shall determine whether or not underground facilities are located on the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavating is to occur. If underground facilities are determined to be present, the facility owner or operator shall designate, through stakes, flags, permanent markers, or other marks on the surface of the tract or parcel of land, the location of such underground facilities. This subsection shall not apply to large projects.

(2) Designation of the location of underground facilities through staking, flagging, permanent markers, or other marking shall be in accordance with the American Public Works Association (APWA) color code in place at the time the location of the underground facility is designated. Additional marking requirements beyond color code, if any, shall be prescribed by rules and regulations promulgated by the commission.

(3) A facility owner or operator is not required to mark its own facilities pursuant to the time frame set out in paragraph (1) of this subsection if the facility owner or operator or its agents are the only parties performing the excavation; however, such facilities shall be designated prior to the actual start of excavation.

(b)(1) Prior to 7:00 A.M. on the effective date indicated in a locate request submitted in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6, each sewer system owner or operator shall determine whether sewer laterals are located or likely to be located on the tract or parcel of land upon which the blasting or excavating is to occur. If sewer laterals are determined to be present or likely to be present, then the sewer system owner or operator shall assist in designating sewer laterals

up to the edge of the public right of way. Such assistance shall not constitute ownership or operation of the sewer lateral by the sewer system owner or operator. Good faith compliance with provisions of this subsection in response to a locate request shall constitute full compliance with this chapter, and no person shall be found liable to any party for damages or injuries as a result of performing in compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

(2) To assist in designating sewer laterals, the sewer system owner or operator shall provide its best available information regarding the location of the sewer laterals to the excavator. Such information shall be conveyed to the excavator in a manner that may include, but shall not be limited to, any one of the following methods:

(A) Marking the location of sewer laterals in accordance with subsection (a) of this section, provided that:

(i) Any sewer lateral designated using the best available information shall constitute a good faith attempt and shall be deemed to be in compliance with this subsection, provided that such mark represents only the best available information of the sewer system owner or operator and may not be accurate; and

(ii) If a sewer lateral is unlocatable, a triangular green mark shall be placed at the sewer main pointing at the address in question to indicate the presence of an unlocatable sewer lateral;

(B) Providing electronic copies of or delivering the records through facsimile or by other means to an agreed upon location within 48 hours beginning the next business day following receipt by the UPC of the locate request submitted in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6, excluding hours during days other than business days; provided, however, that for local governing authorities that receive fewer than 50 locate requests annually, the local governing authority may designate the agreed upon location and communicate such designation to the excavator;

(C) Arranging to meet the excavator on site to provide the best available information about the location of the sewer laterals;

(D) Providing the records through other processes and to other locations approved by documented agreement between the excavator and the facility owner or operator; or

(E) Any other reasonable means of conveyance approved by the commission after receiving recommendations from the advisory committee, provided that such means are equivalent to or exceed the provisions of subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of this paragraph.

(c) Each facility owner or operator, either upon determining that no underground facility or sewer lateral is present on the tract or parcel of

land or upon completion of the designation of the location of any underground facilities or sewer laterals on the tract or parcel of land as required by subsection (a) or (b) of this Code section, shall provide such information to the UPC in accordance with procedures developed by the UPC, which may include the use of the PRIS. In no event shall such information be provided later than midnight of the business day prior to the effective date of the locate request submitted in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6.

(d) In the event the facility owner or operator is unable to designate the location of the underground facilities or sewer laterals due to extraordinary circumstances, such facility owner or operator shall notify the UPC and provide an estimated completion date in accordance with procedures developed by the UPC, which may include the use of the PRIS. The UPC shall also have the ability to declare extraordinary circumstances on behalf of any or all operators if the UPC is unable to transmit locate requests as required by this statute.

(e) If, at the end of the time period specified in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section, any facility owner or operator has not complied with the requirements of subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this Code section, as applicable, the UPC shall issue a second request to each such facility owner or operator. If the facility owner or operator does not respond to such second request by 12:00 Noon of that business day, either by notifying the UPC in accordance with procedures developed by the UPC that no underground facilities or sewer laterals are present on the tract or parcel of land, or by designating the location of such underground facilities or sewer laterals in accordance with the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section, as applicable, then the person that submitted the locate request pursuant to Code Section 25-9-6 may proceed with the blasting or excavating, provided that there is no visible and obvious evidence of the presence of an unmarked underground facility or sewer lateral on the tract or parcel of land. Such person shall not be subject to any liability resulting from damage to the underground facility or sewer lateral as a result of the blasting or excavating, provided that such person complies with the requirements of Code Section 25-9-8.

(f) If visible and obvious evidence of the presence of an unmarked underground facility or sewer lateral does exist and the facility owner or operator either refuses to comply with subsections (a) through (d) of this Code section, as applicable, or is not a member of the UPC, then the excavator shall attempt to designate such facility or sewer lateral prior to excavating. The facility owner or operator shall be strictly liable for the actual costs associated with the excavator designating such underground facilities and sewer laterals and any associated downtime. Such costs shall not exceed \$100.00 or documented actual costs, whichever is greater, for each locate request.

(g) All underground facilities installed by facility owners or operators on or after January 1, 2001, shall be installed in a manner which will make them locatable using a generally accepted electronic locating method. All sewer laterals installed on or after January 1, 2006, shall be installed in a manner which will make them locatable by facility owners or operators using a generally accepted electronic locating method. In the event that an unlocatable underground facility or unlocatable sewer lateral becomes exposed when the facility owner or operator is present or in the case of sewer laterals when the underground sewer owner or operator is present on or after January 1, 2006, such underground facility or sewer lateral shall be made locatable through the use of a permanent marker or an updating of permanent records.

(h) Facility owners or operators shall either maintain recorded information concerning the location and other characteristics of abandoned underground facilities, maintain such abandoned underground facilities in a locatable manner, or remove such abandoned underground facilities. Facility owners or operators shall provide information on abandoned underground facilities, when possible, in response to a locate request or design locate request. When the presence of an abandoned underground facility within an excavation site is known, the facility owner or operator should attempt to designate the abandoned underground facility or provide information to the excavator regarding such facilities. When located or exposed, all abandoned underground facilities and sewer laterals shall be treated as live underground facilities and sewer laterals.

(i) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a facility owner or operator may use a locator to designate any or all underground facilities and sewer laterals. The use of a locator shall not relieve the facility owner or operator of any responsibility under this chapter. However, by contract a facility owner or operator may be indemnified by a locator for any failure on the part of the locator to comply with the provisions of this chapter.

(j) Large project rules shall be promulgated by the commission. These rules shall include, but shall not be limited to, the establishment of detailed processes. Such rules may also include changes in the time period allowed for a facility owner or operator to comply with the provisions of this chapter and the time period for which designations are valid.

(k)(1) Within the notice period of the locate request submitted in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6, excluding hours during days other than business days, each facility owner or operator shall determine whether or not unlocatable facilities other than sewer laterals are present. In the event that such facilities are determined to be present, the facility owner or operator shall exercise reasonable care in locating

such facilities. The exercise of reasonable care shall require, at a minimum, the use of the best available information to designate the facilities and notification to the UPC of such attempted location. Placing markers or otherwise leaving evidence of locations of facilities is deemed to be an acceptable form of notification to the excavator or locator.

(2) This subsection shall not apply to sewer laterals.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 6; Ga. L. 1975, p. 417, § 4; Code 1981, § 25-9-6; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 6/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 4/SB 117; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” throughout this Code section; in paragraph (a)(1), substituted “Prior to 7:00 A.M. on the effective date,” for “Within 48 hours beginning the next business day following receipt by the UPC of the locate request filed in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6, excluding hours during days other than business days,” at the beginning of the first sentence and inserted “such” in the second sentence; substituted “blasting or excavating” for “excavating or blasting” in the first sentences of paragraphs (a)(1) and (b)(1), and in the second sentence in subsection (e); substituted “commission” for “Public Service Commission” at the end of paragraph (a)(2) and in subsection (j); substituted “pursuant to the time frame set out in paragraph (1) of this subsection” for “within 48 hours” in paragraph (a)(3); in paragraph (b)(1), substituted “Prior to 7:00 A.M. on the effective date indicated in a locate request submitted in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6,” for “Within 48 hours beginning the next business day following receipt by the UPC of the locate request filed in accordance with Code Section 25-9-6, excluding hours during days

other than business days,” at the beginning, and “whether sewer” for “whether or not sewer”; substituted “Such” for “This” at the beginning of the second sentence in the introductory language of paragraph (b)(2); substituted “submitted” for “filed” in subparagraph (b)(2)(B); in subsection (c), substituted “provide such” for “provide this” in the first sentence and “information” for “notice” and “business day prior to the effective date of the locate request submitted” for “second business day following receipt by the UPC of actual notice filed” in the second sentence; in subsection (d), substituted “circumstances, such” for “circumstances, the” in the first sentence and added the second sentence; substituted “such second” for “this additional” and “that submitted the locate request” for “providing notice” in the second sentence in subsection (e); substituted “underground sewer” for “sewer utility” in the second sentence in subsection (g); and substituted “the notice period of the locate request submitted” for “48 hours beginning the next business day following receipt by the UPC of the locate request filed” in the first sentence of paragraph (k)(1).

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for treatment to be given gas pipes and facilities by persons undertaking blasting or excavating. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-8.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-6 as this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of gas company for injury or damage due to defects in service lines on consumer’s premises, 26 A.L.R.2d 136.

Liability of gas company for damage resulting from failure to inspect or supervise work of contractors digging near gas pipes, 71 A.L.R.3d 1174.

25-9-8. Treatment of underground facilities by blasters and excavators; emergency notifications.

(a) Persons engaged in blasting or in excavating with mechanized excavating equipment shall not strike, damage, injure, or loosen any underground facility or sewer lateral which has been staked, flagged, or marked in accordance with this chapter.

(b) When blasting or excavating is to take place within the tolerance zone, the excavator shall exercise reasonable care for the protection of the underground facility or sewer lateral, including permanent markers and paint placed to designate underground facilities. Such protection shall include, but shall not be limited to, at least one of the following based on geographical and climate conditions: hand digging, pot holing, soft digging, vacuum excavation methods, pneumatic hand tools, or other technical methods that may be developed. Other mechanical methods may be used with the approval of the facility owner or operator.

(c) If the precise location of the underground facilities cannot be determined by the excavator, the facility owner or operator thereof shall be notified by the excavator so that the operator and the excavator shall work together to determine the precise location of the underground facilities prior to continuing the excavation.

(d) When conducting trenchless excavation the excavator shall exercise reasonable care, as described in subsection (b) of this Code section, and shall take additional care to attempt to prevent damage to underground facilities and sewer laterals. The advisory committee may recommend to the commission more stringent criteria as it deems necessary to define additional care. The commission is authorized to adopt additional criteria to define additional care.

(e) Any person engaged in blasting or in excavating with mechanized excavating equipment that strikes, damages, injures, or loosens any underground facility or sewer lateral, regardless as to whether the underground facility or sewer lateral is marked, shall immediately cease such blasting or excavating and notify the UPC and the appropriate facility owner or operator, if known. Upon receiving such notification from the excavator or the UPC, the facility owner or operator shall send personnel to the location as soon as possible to effect temporary or permanent repair of such damage. Until such time as the damage has been repaired, no person shall engage in blasting or excavating activities that may cause further damage to the underground facility or sewer lateral except as provided in Code Section 25-9-12.

(f) The excavator shall make an emergency 9-1-1 call to alert emergency services upon striking or damaging an underground facility that carries:

- (1) Gas as defined in 49 C.F.R. Parts 192 and 193; or
- (2) Hazardous liquid as defined in 49 C.F.R. Part 195.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 7; Code 1981, § 25-9-7; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 7/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 5/SB 117; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” throughout this Code section; substituted “blasting or excavating” for “excavating or blasting” in the first sentence in subsection (b) and the last sentence in subsection (e); in subsection (b), substituted “Such” for “This” at the beginning of the second sentence and inserted “shall” preceding “not” in the second sentence; in subsection (d), substituted “shall exercise” for “must exercise” in the first sentence, deleted the former second sentence, which read: “The recommendations of the HDD consortium applicable to the performance of trenchless excavation set out in the document ‘Hori-

zontal Directional Drilling Good Practice Guidelines,’ dated May, 2001, are adopted by reference as a part of this subsection to describe such additional care.” and separated the former last sentence into the present last two sentences; in subsection (e), substituted “that” for “who”, and “as to” for “of” in the first sentence, and substituted “such notification” for “notice” and “such damage” for “the damage” in the second sentence; and added subsection (f).

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for the degree of accuracy required of gas companies in providing pipe location and for the apportionment of liability for inaccurate information. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-9.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-7 as this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of gas company for damage resulting from failure to inspect or supervise work of contractors digging near gas pipes, 71 A.L.R.3d 1174.

Liability of one excavating in highway for injury to public utility cables, conduits, or the like, 73 A.L.R.3d 987.

25-9-9. Degree of accuracy required in underground facility location information; liability due to inaccurate, lack of, or delayed communication of location information.

(a) For the purposes of this chapter, the location of underground facilities provided by a facility owner or operator in accordance with subsection (a) of Code Section 25-9-7 to any person engaging in scheduled blasting and excavating shall be accurate to within 18 inches, measured horizontally from the outer edge of either side of such underground facilities. If any underground facility becomes damaged by an excavator due to the furnishing of inaccurate information as to its location by the facility owner or operator, the excavator shall not be subject to any liability resulting from damage to the underground facility as a result of the blasting or excavating, provided that such person engaging in scheduled blasting or excavating complies with the requirements of

Code Section 25-9-8 and there is no visible and obvious evidence to the excavator of the presence of a mismarked underground facility.

(b) Upon documented evidence that the person seeking information as to the location of underground facilities has incurred losses or expenses due to inaccurate information, lack of information, or unreasonable delays in supplying information by the facility owners or operators, such facility owners or operators shall be liable to such person for any such losses or expenses.

History.

Ga. L. 1975, p. 417, § 5; Code 1981, § 25-9-8; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 8/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 6/SB 117; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” throughout this Code section; in subsection (a), deleted “which is”, substituted “engaging in scheduled blasting and excavating shall” for “must”, and inserted a comma following “inches” in the first sentence, and, in the second sentence, substituted “the excavator” for “such excavator” and inserted “engaging in scheduled blasting or excavating”; and,

in subsection (b), substituted “such facility” for “the facility” and “such person” for “that person”.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2000, “its” was substituted for “their” in the second sentence in subsection (a).

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for the effect of this chapter on the rights, duties, etc. of gas companies. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-10.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-8 as this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of gas company for damage resulting from failure to inspect or super-

vise work of contractors digging near gas pipes, 71 A.L.R.3d 1174.

25-9-10. Effect of chapter upon rights, titles, powers, or interests of facility owners or operators.

This chapter does not affect and is not intended to affect any right, title, power, or interest that any facility owner or operator may have with relation to any underground facility or to any easement, right of way, license, permit, or other interest in or with respect to the land on which the underground facility is located.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 8; Code 1981, § 25-9-9; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “that” for

“which”, and “underground” for “utility” twice.

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for the effect of this chapter on local and state government rights, duties, etc. as to facilities on public right of ways. Ga. L. 1986, p.

1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-11. numbered former Code Section 25-9-9 as this Code section.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect re-

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of gas company for injury or damage due to defects in service lines on consumer's premises, 26 A.L.R.2d 136.

25-9-10.1. Cooperation with the Department of Transportation.

(a)(1) On and after July 1, 2023, the Department of Transportation shall participate in and cooperate with the UPC for purposes of receiving locate requests in the Department of Transportation's right of way for underground facilities following a process consistent with Code Sections 25-9-6, 25-9-7, and 25-9-8 and subsection (a) of Code Section 25-9-9.

(2) The Department of Transportation shall not be subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-9-9 or the enforcement provisions of subsections (h) and (i) of Code Section 25-9-14.

(3) The Department of Transportation shall not participate in the funding of the UPC or its activities.

(b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to deem the Department of Transportation to be a utility owner or a utility provider.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-10.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective September 1, 2022.

25-9-11. Effect of chapter in relation to public road or street right of way.

This chapter does not affect and is not intended to affect any rights, powers, interest, or liability of the state or the Department of Transportation with respect to the state highway system, the county road system, or the municipal street system, or of a county with respect to the county road system or of a municipality with respect to the city street system, with relation to any underground facility which is or may be installed within the limits of any public road or street right of way, whether the installation is by written or verbal permit, easement, or any form of agreement whatsoever.

History.

Ga. L. 1978, p. 1659, § 4; Code 1981, § 25-9-10; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” in the middle of this Code section.

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for the applicability of this chapter in the event of an emergency. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered the former Code section as Code Section 25-9-12.

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-10 as this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Easements and Licenses, § 75 et seq.

C.J.S.

28A C.J.S., Easements, § 275 et seq.

25-9-11.1. Prohibition of local governing authorities from enforcing local ordinances or resolutions relating to certain marking or location requirements.

No local governing authority shall enforce any ordinance or resolution which imposes fines for a violation of a local ordinance or resolution that establishes requirements for white lining, marking of underground facilities, re-marking of underground facilities, or otherwise locating underground facilities or sewer laterals for any locate request or large project.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-11.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2016, p. 239, § 2/SB 191; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, substituted “underground” for “utility” three times.

25-9-12. Notice requirements for emergency excavations.

The appropriate notice requirements prescribed by Code Section 25-9-6 shall not be required of persons performing emergency excavations; provided, however, that any person that engages in an emergency excavation shall take all reasonable precautions to avoid or minimize damage to any existing underground facilities and sewer laterals; provided, further, that any person that engages in an emergency excavation shall give notification of such emergency excavation as soon as practical to the UPC. In giving such notification, such person shall specifically identify the dangerous condition involved. If it is later determined that the excavation did not qualify as an emergency excavation, all liabilities and penalties will accrue as if no notification had been given.

History.

Ga. L. 1970, p. 226, § 4; Code 1981, § 25-9-11; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780,

§ 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 9/SB 274; Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, rewrote this Code section,

which read: “The notice requirements provided by Code Section 25-9-6 shall not be required of persons performing emergency excavations or excavation in extraordinary circumstances; provided, however, that any person who engages in an emergency excavation or excavation in extraordinary circumstances shall take all reasonable precautions to avoid or minimize damage to any existing utility facilities and sewer laterals; provided, further, that any person who engages in an emergency excavation or excavation in extraordinary circumstances shall give notice of the emergency excavation as soon as practical to the UPC. In giving such notice, such person must specifically identify the dangerous condition involved. If it is later determined that the excavation did not

qualify as an emergency excavation, all liabilities and penalties will accrue as if no notice had been given.”

Editor’s notes.

This Code section formerly provided for penalties for violations of this Code section. Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect repealed the former Code section and enacted Code Section 25-9-13 (now Code Section 25-9-14) on the same subject, effective July 1, 1986. The former Code section was based on Ga. L. 1969, p. 50, § 9; Ga. L. 1970, p. 226, § 3; Ga. L. 1978, p. 1659, § 2; and Ga. L. 1981, Ex. Sess., p. 8 (Code enactment Act).

Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1 in effect renumbered former Code Section 25-9-11 as this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 16 et seq.

25-9-13. Notice requirements for nonemergency excavations in an area declared to have extraordinary circumstances.

The appropriate notice requirements prescribed by Code Section 25-9-6 shall be required of persons performing nonemergency excavations in an area where one or more facility owners or operators has declared extraordinary circumstances in accordance with subsection (d) of Code Section 25-9-7. When a situation of extraordinary circumstances has been declared, the excavator shall be responsible for securing knowledge of the PRIS status of all facility owners or operators in the area to be excavated, as not all facility owners or operators may have declared extraordinary circumstances. Once the PRIS status of all facility owners or operators is known, excavation may commence in accordance with the requirements of subsection (e) of Code Section 25-9-7. If there is visible and obvious evidence of the presence of an unmarked underground facility or sewer lateral of a facility owner or operator that has declared extraordinary circumstances, the excavator shall exercise reasonable care for the protection of such underground facilities and sewer laterals when excavating.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-13, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective September 1, 2022.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372, redesignated former Code Section 25-9-13 as present Code Section 25-9-14.

25-9-14. Strict liability; bond authorization; civil penalties; advisory committee.

(a) Any person that violates the requirements of subsection (a), (f), or (g) of Code Section 25-9-6 and when resultant blasting or excavating damages underground facilities or sewer laterals such person shall be strictly liable for:

(1) All costs incurred by the facility owner or operator in repairing or replacing its damaged facilities, excluding betterments. An investigation of any damages shall be initiated by the completion of the next business day following the repair of the reported damage. All repair invoices shall be sent to the excavator within 90 days of completion of the repair; and

(2) Any injury or damage to persons or property resulting from damaging the underground facilities and sewer laterals.

(b) Each local governing authority is authorized to require by ordinance any bonds on underground contractors or on persons performing blasting or excavating within any public right of way or any dedicated underground easement as it may determine to assure compliance with subsection (a) of this Code section.

(c) Any person that violates the requirements of Code Section 25-9-6 and when resultant blasting or excavating damages underground facilities or sewer laterals such person shall also indemnify the affected facility owner or operator against all claims or costs incurred, if any, for personal injury, property damage, or service interruptions resulting from damaging the underground facilities and sewer laterals. Such obligation to indemnify shall not apply to any county, city, town, or state agency except as permitted by law.

(d) In addition to the other provisions of this Code section, a professional licensing board shall be authorized to suspend or revoke any professional or occupational license, certificate, or registration issued to a person pursuant to Title 43 in instances when such person has repeatedly violated the requirements of Code Section 25-9-6 or 25-9-8.

(e) Subsections (a), (c), and (d) of this Code section shall not apply to any person that commences, performs, or engages in blasting or in excavating with mechanized equipment on any tract or parcel of land in any county in this state if the facility owner or operator to which appropriate notice was given with respect to such blasting or excavating with mechanized equipment as prescribed in subsection (a) of Code Section 25-9-6 has failed to comply with Code Section 25-9-7 or has failed to become a member of the UPC as required by Code Section 25-9-5. A facility owner or operator to which appropriate notice of

blasting or excavating with mechanized equipment as prescribed in subsection (a) of Code Section 25-9-6 was given shall be prohibited from seeking claims for damages if no designation of underground facilities or sewer laterals was performed prior to the damage being incurred and the person blasting or excavating complied with the provisions in Code Section 25-9-8.

(f) The enforcement provisions of this Code section shall not apply to any person that commences, performs, or engages in blasting or in excavating with mechanized equipment within the curb lines or edges of the pavement of any public road and that causes damage to an underground facility located within the roadway hard surface or the graded aggregate base therein if such person has complied with the provisions of this chapter and there is no indication that an underground facility is in conflict with the proposed excavation.

(g) Any person engaged in excavating the concrete or asphalt of a road maintained by a local governing authority for the purpose of road repair, full depth reclamation, potholing, or general road repair that complies with Code Section 25-9-6 shall not be held liable for damage claims if the underground facility or sewer facility falls within the depth of the existing pavement and subbase materials or 12 inches below the road surface, whichever is less.

(h) The commission shall enforce the provisions of this chapter. The commission may promulgate any rules and regulations necessary to implement the commission's authority to enforce this chapter. In order to provide local governing authorities adequate time for initial budgeting and staffing, the starting date for enforcement of the requirement to locate traffic control devices and traffic management systems shall be January 1, 2024.

(i) Enforcement actions brought under this chapter shall commence within three years from the date that the probable violation was reported to the commission.

(j)(1) The Governor shall appoint an advisory committee as follows:

(A) One member to represent the Department of Transportation;

(B) One member to represent traffic control devices, traffic management systems, water systems, or water and sewer systems owned or operated by local governing authorities;

(C) One member to represent the UPC;

(D) One member to represent traffic control devices, traffic management systems, water systems, or water and sewer systems owned or operated by counties;

(E) One member to represent traffic control devices, traffic management systems, water systems, or water and sewer systems owned or operated by municipalities;

(F) One member to represent the nonmunicipal electric industry;

(G) Five members to represent excavators to include the following:

(i) One member to represent licensed utility contractors;

(ii) One member to represent licensed general contractors;

(iii) One member to represent licensed plumbers;

(iv) One member to represent landscape contractors; and

(v) One member to represent highway contractors;

(H) One member to represent locators;

(I) One member to represent the nonmunicipal telecommunications industry;

(J) One member to represent the nonmunicipal natural gas industry;

(K) One member to represent municipal gas, electric, or telecommunications providers; and

(L) The commission chairperson or such chairperson's designee.

The commission chairperson or his or her designee shall serve as chairperson of the advisory committee and shall cast a vote only in the case of a tie. Persons appointed to the advisory committee shall have expert knowledge of this chapter and specific operations expertise with the subject matter encompassed by the provisions of this chapter.

(2) The advisory committee shall establish rules of operation including an attendance policy. In the event a committee member resigns or fails to meet the criteria of the attendance policy, the advisory committee shall appoint an interim member to represent the same stakeholder group until such time as the Governor appoints a replacement.

(3) The advisory committee shall assist the commission in the enforcement of this chapter, make recommendations to the commission regarding rules and regulations, and perform duties to be assigned by the commission including, but not limited to, the review of reported violations of this chapter and the preparation of recom-

mendations to the commission as to the appropriate penalties to impose on persons violating the provisions of this chapter.

(4) The members of the advisory committee shall be immune, individually and jointly, from civil liability for any act or omission done or made in the performance of their duties while serving as members of such advisory committee, but only in the absence of willful misconduct.

(k)(1) Commission enforcement of this chapter shall follow the procedures described in this subsection. Nothing in this subsection shall limit the authority of the commission delegated from the federal government and authorized in other state law.

(2)(A) The commission is not authorized to impose civil penalties on any local governing authority except as provided in this paragraph. The commission may recommend training for local governing authorities in response to any probable or proven violation. Civil penalties may be recommended for or imposed on any local governing authority for refusal to comply with the requirements of Code Section 25-9-7 or for other violations of Code Section 25-9-7 that result in injury to people, damage to property, or the interruption of underground facility service in the event that investigators find that a local governing authority has demonstrated a pattern of willful noncompliance. Civil penalties may be recommended or imposed for violations of provisions of this chapter other than Code Section 25-9-7 in the event that investigators find that the severity of an excavation violation warrants civil penalties or that a local governing authority has demonstrated a pattern of willful noncompliance. Any such civil penalty shall be recommended or imposed in accordance with a tiered penalty structure designed for local governing authorities. In the event that the investigators determine that a local governing authority has made a good faith effort to comply with this chapter, the investigators shall not recommend a civil penalty. For purposes of this subsection “refusal to comply” means that an underground facility owner or operator does not respond in PRIS to a locate request, does not respond to a direct telephone call to designate their facilities, or other such direct refusal. Refusal to comply shall not mean a case where the volume of requests or some other mitigating circumstance prevents the underground facility owner or operator from locating in accordance with Code Section 25-9-7.

(B) No later than January 1, 2006, the advisory committee shall recommend to the commission for adoption a tiered penalty structure for local governing authorities. Such structure shall take into account the size, annual budget, gross receipts, number of underground facility connections and types of utilities within

the territory of the local governing authority. Such penalty structure shall also take into account the number of locate requests received annually by the local governing authority, the number of locate codes made annually to the local governing authority from the UPC, the number of customers whose service may have been interrupted by violations of this chapter, and the duration of such interruptions. Such penalty structure shall also consider the cost of compliance. The penalty structure shall establish for each tier the maximum penalty per violation and per 12 month period at a level to induce compliance with this chapter. Such maximum penalty shall not exceed \$5,000.00 per violation or \$50,000.00 per 12 month period for the highest tier.

(3) If commission investigators find that a probable violation has occurred, they may recommend training in lieu of penalties to any person for any violation. The commission shall provide suggestions for corrective action to any person requesting such assistance. Commission investigators shall make recommended findings or offers of settlement to the respondent.

(4) Any respondent may accept or disagree with the settlement recommended by the investigators. If the respondent disagrees with the recommended settlement, the respondent may dispute the settlement recommendation to the advisory committee. The advisory committee shall then render a recommendation either supporting the investigators' recommendation, rejecting the investigators' recommendation, or substituting its own recommendation. With respect to an investigation of any probable violation committed by a local governing authority, any recommendation by the advisory committee shall be in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. In its deliberations the advisory committee shall consider the gravity of the violation or violations; the degree of the respondent's culpability; the respondent's history of prior offenses; and such other mitigating factors as may be appropriate. If the advisory committee determines that a respondent has made a good faith effort to comply with this chapter, the committee shall not recommend civil penalties against the respondent. To the extent that a respondent does not accept a settlement agreement or request to dispute the recommendation of the investigators to the advisory committee, the respondent shall be assigned to a hearing officer or administrative law judge.

(5) If any respondent disagrees with the recommendation of the advisory committee, after notice and hearing by a hearing officer or administrative law judge, such officer or judge shall make recommendations to the commission regarding enforcement, including civil penalties. Any such recommendations relating to a local governing

authority shall comply with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. The acceptance of the recommendations by the respondent at any point shall stop further action by the investigators in such case.

(6) When the respondent agrees with the advisory committee recommendation, the investigators shall present such agreement to the commission. The commission is then authorized to adopt the recommendation of the advisory committee regarding a civil penalty, or to reject such a recommendation. The commission is not authorized to impose a civil penalty greater than the civil penalty recommended by the advisory committee or to impose any civil penalty if the advisory committee does not recommend a civil penalty.

(7) The commission may, by judgment entered after a hearing on notice duly served on any person not less than 30 days before the date of the hearing, impose a civil penalty not exceeding \$10,000.00 for each violation, if it is proved that the person violated any of the provisions of this chapter as a result of a failure to exercise additional care in accordance with subsection (d) of Code Section 25-9-8 or reasonable care in accordance with other provisions of this chapter. Any such recommendations relating to a local governing authority shall comply with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. Any proceeding or civil penalty undertaken pursuant to this Code section shall neither prevent nor preempt the right of any party to obtain civil damages for personal injury or property damage in private causes of action except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

(1) All civil penalties ordered by the commission and collected pursuant to this Code section shall be deposited in the general fund of the state treasury.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-9-13, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 1069, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 495, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 805, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 780, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19; Ga. L. 2005, p. 1142, § 10/SB 274; Ga. L. 2014, p. 652, § 7/SB 117; Ga. L. 2014, p. 866, § 25/SB 340; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90; Code 1981, § 25-9-14, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2022, p. 325, § 1/HB 1372.

The 2022 amendment, effective September 1, 2022, redesignated former Code Section 25-9-13 as present Code Section 25-9-14; substituted “underground” for “utility” throughout this Code section; re-wrote the introductory paragraph of subsection (a), which read: “Any person who violates the requirements of subsection (a), (f), or (g) of Code Section 25-9-6 and

whose subsequent excavating or blasting damages utility facilities or sewer laterals shall be strictly liable for:”, in paragraph (a)(1), added “, excluding betterments” at the end of the first sentence and added the second and third sentences; substituted “blasting or excavating” for “excavating or blasting” and “any public” for “the public” in subsection (b); substituted “that” for “who” and “when resultant blasting or excavating” for “whose subsequent excavating or blasting” in the first sentence in subsection (c); substituted “in instances when” for “whenever” in subsection (d); substituted “that commences, performs, or engages” for “who shall commence, perform, or engage” in subsections (e) and (f); in subsection (e), inserted “appropriate” and substituted “with respect to” for “re-

specting” in the first sentence, and added the second sentence; substituted “that causes damage to an underground” for “who causes damage to a utility” and “indication that an underground” for “indication that a utility” in subsection (f); added subsection (g); redesignated former subsection (g) as subsection (h) and added the second sentence; added subsection (i); redesignated former subsections (h) through (j) as (j) through (l); substituted “as follows” for “consisting of persons who are employees or officials of or who represent the interests of” at the end of the introductory language of paragraph (j)(1), substituted “traffic control devices, traffic management systems, water systems,” for “water systems” in subparagraphs (j)(1)(B), (j)(1)(D), and (j)(1)(E), substituted “UPC” for “utilities protection center” at the end of subparagraph (j)(1)(C), inserted “member to represent” in divisions (j)(1)(G)(i) through (j)(1)(G)(v), substituted “contractors” for “contractor” in divisions (j)(1)(G)(i), (j)(1)(G)(ii),

(j)(1)(G)(iv), and (j)(1)(G)(v), and substituted “plumbers” for “plumber” in division (j)(1)(G)(iii); in subparagraph (k)(2)(A), inserted “facility” in the third sentence, deleted “on or after January 1, 2006” following “imposed” in the fourth sentence, substituted “that an” for “that a” in the seventh sentence, and in the eighth sentence, substituted “shall” for “does” and inserted “facility”; in subparagraph (k)(2)(B), inserted “facility” in the first sentence and substituted “number of customers” for “number of utility customers” in the second sentence; and substituted “shall” for “will” and “such” for “that” in the last sentence in paragraph (k)(5).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2022, a comma was deleted preceding “imposed” in the fourth sentence of subparagraph (k)(2)(A).

Editor’s notes.

See the editor’s notes to Code Section 25-9-12.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

36 Am. Jur. 2d, Forfeitures and Penalties, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

70 C.J.S., Penalties, § 1 et seq.

CHAPTER 10

REGULATION OF FIREWORKS

Sec.		Sec.	
25-10-1.	Definitions.		sumer fireworks; required signage.
25-10-2.	Prohibited fireworks activities; application of noise ordinances.	25-10-6.	Fireworks manufactured, sold, or stored in violation of chapter declared contraband; seizure and disposition thereof; forfeiture.
25-10-2.1.	Use of fireworks and consumer fireworks while under the influence; violation.	25-10-7.	Applicability of provisions of chapter.
25-10-3.	Permitted sales and uses of fireworks.	25-10-8.	Penalty for violations of chapter.
25-10-3.1.	Storage of fireworks by licensed nonmanufacturers.	25-10-9.	Penalty for illegal use or sale of fireworks.
25-10-3.2.	License required for pyrotechnics exhibits; requirements; penalty for violations.	25-10-10.	Prohibition on release of certain fire-propelled devices into the air and certain floating lantern devices into public water locations.
25-10-4.	Permit required to conduct public fireworks exhibition or display.	25-10-11.	Enforcement; cease and desist orders; license revocation; opportunity for hearing; penalty for failure to comply with order; authority to bring civil action.
25-10-4.1.	Prohibition of employment of minors where fireworks are stored or displayed.	25-10-12.	Additional grounds for revocation or suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal of license.
25-10-5.	License and fee for manufacture, storage, and transportation of fireworks or pyrotechnic displays; regulations; inspections.		
25-10-5.1.	Requirements for issuance of license to distribute con-		

Administrative rules and regulations.

Manufacturing, Storage, Sales, Exhibitions and Displays of Fireworks and Pyrotechnics, Use of Flame Effects Before a Proximate Audience, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety, Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-22-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application of state or local laws regulating the sale, possession, use, or transport of fireworks, 48 A.L.R.5th 659.

25-10-1. Definitions.

- (a) As used in this chapter, the term:
- (1) “Consumer fireworks” means any small fireworks devices

containing restricted amounts of pyrotechnic composition, designed primarily to produce visible or audible effects by combustion, that comply with the construction, chemical composition, and labeling regulations of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission as provided for in Parts 1500 and 1507 of Title 16 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the United States Department of Transportation as provided for in Part 172 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the American Pyrotechnics Association as provided for in the 2001 American Pyrotechnics Association Standard 87-1, and additionally shall mean Roman candles.

(2) “Consumer fireworks retail sales facility” shall have the same meaning as provided for by NFPA 1124; provided, however, that such term shall not include a tent, canopy, or membrane structure.

(3) “Consumer fireworks retail sales stand” shall have the same meaning as provided for by NFPA 1124.

(4) “Distributor” means any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership which sells consumer fireworks.

(4.1) “Electric plant” shall have the same meaning as provided for in Code Section 46-3A-1.

(5) “Fireworks” means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, including blank cartridges, firecrackers, torpedos, skyrockets, bombs, sparklers, and other combustibles and explosives of like construction, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

(6) “NFPA 1124” means the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1124, *Code for the Manufacture, Transportation, Storage, and Retail Sales of Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles*, 2006 Edition.

(7) “Nonprofit group” means any entity exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, any entity incorporated under Chapter 3 of Title 14, the “Georgia Non-profit Corporation Code,” or a sponsored organization of a public or private elementary or secondary school in this state.

(8) “Proximate audience” means an audience closer to pyrotechnic devices than permitted by the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1123, *Code for Fireworks Display*, as adopted by the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(9) “Pyrotechnics” means fireworks.

(10) “Store” shall have the same meaning as provided for by NFPA 1124; provided, however, that such term shall only include such

buildings with at least 4,000 square feet of retail display space and wherefrom:

(A) No more than 25 percent of such retail display space is used for consumer fireworks and items or products as provided for under paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this Code section; and

(B) Other items or products which are not consumer fireworks or items or products as provided for under paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this Code section are sold;

and provided, further, that such term means a person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership with more than one mercantile location, where all such mercantile locations are collectively known to the public by the same name or share central management.

(11) “Waste-water treatment plant” shall have the same meaning as provided for in Code Section 43-51-2.

(12) “Water treatment plant” shall have the same meaning as provided for in Code Section 43-51-2.

(b) As used in this chapter, the term “consumer fireworks” or “fireworks” shall not include:

(1) Model rockets and model rocket engines designed, sold, and used for the purpose of propelling recoverable aero models, toy pistol paper caps in which the explosive content averages 0.25 grains or less of explosive mixture per paper cap or toy pistols, toy cannons, toy canes, toy guns, or other devices using such paper caps; nor shall the term “consumer fireworks” or “fireworks” include ammunition consumed by weapons used for sporting and hunting purposes; and

(2) Wire or wood sparklers of 100 grams or less of mixture per item; other sparkling items which are nonexplosive and nonaerial and contain 75 grams or less of chemical compound per tube or a total of 500 grams or less for multiple tubes; snake and glow worms; smoke devices; or trick noise makers which include paper streamers, party poppers, string poppers, snappers, and drop pops each consisting of 0.25 grains or less of explosive mixture.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 2; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 798, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 294, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 596, § 1/SB 133; Ga. L. 2007, p. 47, § 25/SB 103; Ga. L. 2015, p. 274, § 2/HB 110; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 5/HB 727.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2015, “party poppers, string poppers” was substituted for “party peppers, string peppers” in paragraph (b)(2).

Law reviews.

For note on the 2003 amendment to this

Code section, see 20 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2003).

For article on the 2016 amendment of

this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Explosives containing no more than 0.25 grains of explosive material. — Party novelties and other explosive devices which are not paper caps but

which contain no more than 0.25 grains of explosive material are considered “fireworks” within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 25-10-1. 1983 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 83-78.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

10A Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms, Explosions and Explosives, § 2.

25-10-2. Prohibited fireworks activities; application of noise ordinances.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to offer for sale at retail or wholesale, to use or ignite or cause to be ignited, or to possess, manufacture, transport, or store any consumer fireworks or fireworks, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.

(b)(1) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, it shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to sell consumer fireworks or any items defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-10-1 to any person under 18 years of age.

(2) It shall be unlawful to sell consumer fireworks or any items defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-10-1 to any person by any means other than an in-person, face-to-face sale. Such person shall provide proper identification to the seller at the time of such purchase. For purposes of this paragraph, the term “proper identification” means any document issued by a governmental agency containing a description of the person or such person’s photograph, or both, and giving such person’s date of birth and includes without being limited to a passport, military identification card, driver’s license, or identification card authorized under Chapter 5 of Title 40.

(3)(A) It shall be unlawful to use fireworks, consumer fireworks, or any items defined in paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-10-1 indoors or within the right of way of a public road, street, highway, or railroad of this state.

(B) Except as provided for in subparagraph (D) or (E) of this

paragraph and subject to paragraph (4) of this subsection and Code Section 25-10-2.1, it shall be lawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to use or ignite or cause to be ignited any consumer fireworks:

(i) On any day beginning at the time of 10:00 A.M. and up to and including the ending time of 11:59 P.M., unless during such times the noise from such use or ignition is not in compliance with a noise ordinance of a county or municipal corporation as provided for in subsection (c) of this Code section, except as otherwise provided for under this subparagraph; provided, however, that a county or municipal corporation may additionally require the issuance of a special use permit pursuant to subparagraph (D) of this paragraph for use or ignition;

(ii) On January 1, the last Saturday and Sunday in May, July 3, July 4, the first Monday in September, and December 31 of each year after the time of 10:00 A.M. and up to and including the time of 11:59 P.M.; and

(iii) On January 1 of each year beginning at the time of 12:00 Midnight and up to and including the ending time of 1:00 A.M.

(C) Subject to subparagraph (D) of this paragraph, paragraph (4) of this subsection, and Code Section 25-10-2.1, it shall be lawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to use or ignite or cause to be ignited any consumer fireworks anywhere in this state except:

(i) As provided for under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph;

(ii) In any location where such person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership is not lawfully present or is not otherwise lawfully permitted to use or ignite or cause to be ignited any consumer fireworks;

(iii) Within 100 yards of an electric plant; water treatment plant; waste-water treatment plant; a facility engaged in the retail sale of gasoline or other flammable or combustible liquids or gases where the volume stored is in excess of 500 gallons for the purpose of retail sale; a facility engaged in the production, refining, processing, or blending of any flammable or combustible liquids or gases for retail purposes; any public or private electric substation; or a jail or prison;

(iv) Within 100 yards of the boundaries of any public use air facility provided for under Title 6 or any public use landing area or platform marked and designed for landing use by helicopters;

(v) Within any park, historic site, recreational area, or other property which is owned by or operated by, for, or under the

custody and control of a governing authority of a county or municipal corporation, except pursuant to a special use permit as provided for in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph;

(vi) Within any park, historic site, recreational area, or other property which is owned by or operated by, for, or under the custody and control of the State of Georgia, except pursuant to any rules and regulations of the agency or department having control of such property which may allow for such use or ignition of consumer fireworks;

(vii) Within 100 yards of a hospital, nursing home, or other health care facility regulated under Chapter 7 of Title 31; provided, however, that an owner or operator of such facility may use or ignite or cause to be ignited consumer fireworks on the property of such facility or may grant written permission to any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to use or ignite or cause to be ignited consumer fireworks on the property of such facility; or

(viii) While under the influence of alcohol or any drug or any combination of alcohol and any drug to the extent that it is less safe or unlawful for such person to ignite consumer fireworks as provided for in Code Section 25-10-2.1.

(D) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership may use or ignite or cause to be ignited any consumer fireworks as provided for under divisions (3)(B)(i) and (3)(C)(v) of this subsection if such person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership is issued a special use permit pursuant to the law of a governing authority of a county or municipal corporation for the use or ignition of consumer fireworks in a location within such county or municipality as provided for under divisions (3)(B)(i) and (3)(C)(v) of this subsection, provided that such special use permit is required for such use or ignition. Such special use permit shall designate the time or times and location that such person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership may use or ignite or cause to be ignited such consumer fireworks. A fee assessed by a county or municipal corporation for the issuance of a special use permit pursuant to this subparagraph shall not exceed \$100.00. No governing authority or official of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision shall bear liability for any decisions made pursuant to this Code section.

(E) Whenever the Keetch-Byram Drought Index reaches a level of 700 or above for any geographical area within a county, the Governor may, in consultation with the State Forestry Commission and the Department of Natural Resources and for pur-

poses of this Code section, issue a declaration of drought for such county and enact further regulations and restrictions prohibiting any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to ignite or cause to be ignited consumer fireworks within the boundaries of such county for the duration of such declaration; provided, however, that upon expiration or conclusion of such declaration or the level on the Keetch-Byram Drought Index receding below 700, whichever occurs first, such further regulations or restrictions shall be rescinded by law.

(4)(A) It shall be lawful for any person 18 years of age or older to use or ignite or cause to be ignited or to possess, manufacture, transport, or store consumer fireworks.

(B) To the extent otherwise permitted by law, it shall be lawful for any person who is 16 or 17 years of age to possess or transport consumer fireworks, provided that such person is serving as an assistant to a distributor licensed under subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 or the nonprofit group benefiting from such distributor's application pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 and is not transporting such consumer fireworks on a highway which constitutes a part of The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

(5)(A) It shall be lawful for any person 18 years of age or older to sell or to offer for sale at retail or wholesale any consumer fireworks pursuant to the requirements of this chapter.

(B) It shall be lawful for any person who is 16 or 17 years of age to sell or to offer for sale at retail or wholesale any consumer fireworks, provided that such person is serving as an assistant to a distributor licensed under subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 or the nonprofit group benefiting from such distributor's application pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1.

(6)(A) It shall be lawful to sell consumer fireworks from a permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility or store only if such permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility or store is:

(i) In compliance with the requirements for such a permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility or store in the selling of consumer fireworks as provided for in NFPA 1124; and

(ii) Selling consumer fireworks of a distributor licensed pursuant to subsection (b) or (d) of Code Section 25-10-5.1.

(B) It shall be lawful to sell consumer fireworks from a temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand only if such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand is:

(i) In compliance with the requirements for such a temporary

consumer fireworks retail sales stand in the selling of consumer fireworks as provided for in NFPA 1124;

(ii) Within 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision or a fire department connection of a building affiliated with such consumer fireworks retail sales stand, unless the chief administrative officer of the fire department of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision or chartered fire department legally organized to operate in this state pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title and having operational authority over such location of the temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand provides in writing that such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand may operate in excess of 1,000 feet from such fire hydrant or fire department connection; and

(iii) Selling consumer fireworks of a distributor licensed pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1.

A distributor licensed pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 may operate no more than two temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stands in this state per location licensed pursuant to subsection (b) or (d) of Code Section 25-10-5.1; provided, however, that such distributor has been operating and open to the public pursuant to subsection (b) or (d) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 no less than 30 days prior to July 4 or December 31 in the year of an application for a license under subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 that is filed within 30 days of July 4 or December 31.

(C) It shall be unlawful to sell consumer fireworks from any motor vehicle, from a trailer towed by a motor vehicle, or from a tent, canopy, or membrane structure.

(c) Any noise ordinance of a county or municipal corporation which is to have effect for purposes of subdivision (b)(3)(B)(i) shall have been enacted or reenacted on or after July 1, 2018, and shall:

(1) Be a general noise ordinance concerning all manner of sounds or noises and such county or municipal corporation shall not have any ordinance separately pertaining to sounds or noises emanating exclusively from consumer fireworks; and

(2) Not have been enacted or reenacted unless notice of the meeting in which such noise ordinance was enacted or reenacted was published one time at least 15 days in advance of such meeting in the legal organ of such county or municipal corporation and was posted for at least 72 hours at least 15 days in advance of such meeting on the homepage of the official website of such county or municipal

corporation. Such notice shall state the date, time, and place of such meeting and that such noise ordinance which will affect the use of consumer fireworks will be acted upon.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 3; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 2; Ga. L. 1996, p. 945, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 596, § 2/SB 133; Ga. L. 2015, p. 274, § 3/HB 110; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 6/HB 727; Ga. L. 2018, p. 181, § 1/HB 419; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(a)(2)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Chapter 5 of Title 40” for “Code Sections 40-5-100 through 40-5-104” at the end of the last sentence of paragraph (b)(2).

Cross references.

Nuisance defined generally, § 41-1-1.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

It is negligence per se to sell fireworks to a minor child, under the circumstances not permitted by Ga. L. 1955, p. 550 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-10-2). *Allen v. Gornto*, 100 Ga. App. 744, 112 S.E.2d 368, 1959 Ga. App. LEXIS 717 (1959).

Exclusion of coverage in a homeowner’s insurance policy for acts of the

insured that violate any criminal law or statute excluded injuries caused by the illegal possession of firecrackers. *Horace Mann Ins. Co. v. Drury*, 213 Ga. App. 321, 445 S.E.2d 272, 1994 Ga. App. LEXIS 565 (1994), cert. denied, No. S94C1391, 1994 Ga. LEXIS 951 (Ga. Sept. 9, 1994).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Activities constituting violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-10-2. — When fireworks are shipped to a buyer in the port area, stored in private warehouses, and then distributed and sold from this particular location, such activity constitutes a violation of Ga. L. 1955, p. 550 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-10-2). 1968 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 68-82.

When fireworks are stored in a bonded warehouse in this state temporarily, and then transported to other states where legalized, there is a violation of Ga. L. 1955, p. 550 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-10-2). 1968 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 68-82.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 13.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 1 et seq.

25-10-2.1. Use of fireworks and consumer fireworks while under the influence; violation.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to ignite consumer fireworks or fireworks while:

(1) Under the influence of alcohol or any drug or any combination of alcohol and any drug to the extent that it is unsafe for such person to ignite consumer fireworks or fireworks; or

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this Code section, there is any amount of marijuana or a controlled substance, as defined in Code Section 16-13-21, present in such person's blood or urine, or both, including the metabolites and derivatives of each or both, without regard to whether or not any alcohol is present in such person's breath or blood.

(b) The fact that any person charged with violating this Code section is or has been legally entitled to use a drug shall not constitute a defense against any charge of violating this Code section; provided, however, that such person shall not be in violation of this Code section unless such person is rendered incapable of igniting consumer fireworks or fireworks safely as a result of using a drug other than alcohol which such person is legally entitled to use.

(c) Any person convicted of violating subsection (a) of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-2.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 7/HB 727.

this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fingerprinting not required. — Of those charged are to be fingerprinted. 2017 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 17-1.
 offenses arising under O.C.G.A. § 25-10-2.1
 are not designated as offenses for which

25-10-3. Permitted sales and uses of fireworks.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit the following:

(1) The wholesale or retail sale of fireworks for use in a public exhibition or public display and the transportation of fireworks for such use, provided that any person selling at wholesale or retail or transporting fireworks for such use must have a duplicate copy of the permit which has been issued by the judge of the probate court to a person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership which has been authorized to hold a public exhibition or display, and provided, further, that the seller maintains and makes available for inspection by the Safety Fire Commissioner or the designee thereof the record of any such fireworks sale for a period of 18 months from the date of sale;

(2) Use by railroads or other transportation agencies of fireworks specifically designed and intended for signal purposes or illumination;

(3) The sale or use of blank cartridges for a show or theater or for

signal or ceremonial purposes in athletic or sports events or for use by military or police organizations; or

(4) The manufacture of any fireworks not prohibited by Congress or any federal agency; the possession, transportation, and storage of any such fireworks by any manufacturer thereof; the storage of certain such fireworks by a nonmanufacturer in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 25-10-3.1; the possession, transportation, or distribution of any such fireworks to a distributor located outside this state; the sale of such fireworks by any such manufacturer to a distributor located outside this state; or the possession and transportation of such fireworks by any manufacturer or contractor or common carrier from the point of manufacture within this state to any point outside this state.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 5; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 4; Ga. L. 1969, p. 1144, § 1; Ga. L. 1996, p. 945, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, § 13.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 1 et seq.

25-10-3.1. Storage of fireworks by licensed nonmanufacturers.

(a) Fireworks defined as Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof by regulations of the United States Department of Transportation set forth in Part 173 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations and which are to be used only for purposes of a public exhibition or display pursuant to Code Section 25-10-4 may be stored by a person, firm, or corporation, other than a manufacturer, pursuant to a magazine license issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this Code section. Any application for such a license shall be made to the Safety Fire Commissioner in a form to be prescribed by the Commissioner. The application shall include a letter of acknowledgment and endorsement from the local authority having responsibility for fire suppression.

(b) Any application for a magazine license made pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall be accompanied by plans for the magazine proposed to be used for storage of Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof, in such detail and in such number of copies as required by the Safety Fire Commissioner. Construction of a magazine for storage of fireworks pursuant to this Code section shall not commence until the plans therefor have been approved by the state fire marshal and returned to the applicant.

(c) No license shall be issued pursuant to this Code section unless:

(1) The applicant currently holds a valid license or permit to receive explosive materials including Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof issued pursuant to regulations of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms of the United States Department of the Treasury;

(2) The applicant presents a copy of a valid permit for a public exhibition or display of fireworks issued pursuant to Code Section 25-10-4;

(3) The state fire marshal or the designee thereof has determined upon inspection that the constructed magazine meets or exceeds the requirements for magazines to be used for storing Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof as established by regulations and adopted codes and standards of the Safety Fire Commissioner; and

(4) The state fire marshal or the designee thereof has determined upon inspection that the constructed magazine meets or exceeds any additional requirements applicable to magazines to be used for storage of Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof by nonmanufacturers as may be established by regulation promulgated pursuant to Code Section 25-10-5.

(d) Any license issued pursuant to this Code section shall be subject to the annual license fee and expiration date provisions of Code Section 25-10-5. The initial annual fee for a magazine license shall be submitted along with the application for such license.

(e) Any fireworks stored under any magazine license issued pursuant to this Code section shall be stored in an approved magazine and in accordance with the regulations for storing Class B explosives or the equivalent thereof as established by regulations of the Safety Fire Commissioner and any additional requirements for storage of such explosives by nonmanufacturers as may be established by regulation promulgated pursuant to Code Section 25-10-5, for a period of time not to exceed 60 days before and 60 days after the permitted date of a public exhibition or display of fireworks pursuant to Code Section 25-10-4.

(f) Any violation of the provisions of this Code section shall be grounds for revoking a magazine license.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-3.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1996, p. 945, § 3.

25-10-3.2. License required for pyrotechnics exhibits; requirements; penalty for violations.

(a) No person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership shall cause the combustion, explosion, deflagration, detonation, or ignition of

pyrotechnics for the purpose of a public exhibition or display before a proximate audience unless such person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership holds a valid license issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of this Code section. Any application for such a license shall be made to the Safety Fire Commissioner in the form prescribed by the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(b) All applicants must meet the following requirements for licensure:

(1) The applicant shall submit to the Safety Fire Commissioner proof of a valid comprehensive liability insurance policy purchased from an insurer authorized to do business in Georgia. The coverage must include bodily injury and property damage, products liability, completed operations, and contractual liability. The proof of insurance must also be provided before any license can be renewed. The minimum amount of said coverage shall be \$1 million or such other amount as specified by the Safety Fire Commissioner. An insurer that provided such coverage shall notify the Safety Fire Commissioner of any change in coverage;

(2) The applicant shall pay the required licensing fee as prescribed in Code Section 25-10-5; and

(3) The applicant shall comply with all rules and regulations promulgated by the Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter.

(c) Any violation of this chapter shall be grounds for revocation or denial of licensure to conduct pyrotechnic displays.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-3.2, enacted by Ga. L. 2003, p. 294, § 2; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 8/HB 727.

Law reviews.

For note on the 2003 enactment of this

Code section, see 20 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2003).

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

25-10-4. Permit required to conduct public fireworks exhibition or display.

(a) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership desiring to conduct a public exhibition or display of fireworks not before a proximate audience shall first obtain a permit from the judge of the probate court of the county in which the public exhibition or display is to be held. Application for a permit must be made in writing and filed with the judge not less than ten days prior to the date of the proposed public exhibition or display of fireworks. Fireworks distributors located outside this state shall obtain display permit application forms and

provide the same to applicants upon request. The judge may grant a permit for the display on the following conditions:

(1) That the display be conducted by a competent operator approved by the judge;

(2) That the display shall be of such character as in the opinion of the judge will not be hazardous to persons or property;

(3) That the local fire official responsible for the area in question certifies in writing that the site for the display meets his or her approval and is in compliance with all applicable codes; and

(4) That the application be accompanied by a bond in the principal sum of \$10,000.00, payable to the county in which the display is being held and conditioned for the payment of damages which may be caused either to persons or to property by reason of the display or, alternatively, that the application be accompanied by evidence that the applicant carries proper liability insurance for bodily injury in the amount of not less than \$25,000.00 for each person and \$50,000.00 for each accident and for property damage in the amount of not less than \$25,000.00 for each accident and \$50,000.00 aggregate, with an insurance company duly licensed by the Commissioner of Insurance.

(b) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership desiring to conduct a public exhibition or display of fireworks before a proximate audience shall first obtain a permit from the judge of the probate court of the county in which the public exhibition or display is to be held. Application for a permit must be made in writing and filed with the judge not less than ten days prior to the date of the proposed public exhibition or display of fireworks. Such application must contain the license number issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner for the person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership that will cause the combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation of pyrotechnics at the public exhibition or display. Fireworks distributors located outside this state shall obtain display permit application forms and provide the same to applicants upon request. The judge may grant a permit for the display on the following conditions:

(1) That the display be conducted by a competent operator approved by the judge;

(2) That the display shall be of such character as in the opinion of the judge will not be hazardous to persons or property;

(3) That the local fire official responsible for the area in question certifies in writing that the site for the display meets his or her approval and is in compliance with all applicable codes; and

(4) That the application be accompanied by a bond in the principal sum of \$10,000.00, payable to the county in which the display is being

held and conditioned for the payment of damages that may be caused either to persons or to property by reason of the display or, alternatively, that the application be accompanied by evidence that the applicant carries property liability insurance for bodily injury in the amount of not less than \$25,000.00 for each person and \$50,000.00 for each accident and for property damage in the amount of not less than \$25,000.00 for each accident and \$50,000.00 aggregate, with an insurance company duly licensed by the Commissioner of Insurance.

(c) No permit, as provided for in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section, shall be granted unless the applicant has met all the requirements of and is in full compliance with the rules and regulations promulgated by the Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter.

(d) The permit provided for in subsection (a) or (b) of this Code section shall be limited to the time specified therein, such time not to exceed a two-week period. The permit shall not be transferable. In the event any fireworks bought and possessed under this Code section are not used by the licensee or in the event that there is a surplus or excess after the two-week period expires, it shall be the duty of the licensee to return such fireworks to a facility approved in accordance with Code Section 25-10-3.1 and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Safety Fire Commissioner. Fireworks stored in accordance with Code Section 25-10-3.1 and regulations shall not be deemed contraband and shall not be subject to seizure.

(e) The judge of the probate court shall receive \$10.00 for his or her services in granting or refusing the original permit and \$1.00 for each copy issued, to be paid by the applicant. The judge of the probate court shall provide the Safety Fire Commissioner a copy of each permit granted prior to the proposed date of the public exhibition or display.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, §§ 3, 4; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 3; Ga. L. 1994, p. 317, § 1; Ga. L. 1996, p. 945, § 4; Ga. L. 2003, p. 294, § 3.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1995, "Commissioner of Insurance" was

substituted for "Insurance Commissioner" at the end of paragraph (a)(3) [now paragraph (a)(4)].

Law reviews.

For note on the 2003 amendment to this Code section, see 20 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2003).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Restricting manufacturing, selling, and use of fireworks not unconstitutional. — Ga. L. 1955, p. 550 (see now O.C.G.A. § 25-10-4) restricting the manufacture, sale, and use of fireworks, does not violate the commerce clause of the

federal Constitution, nor is it unconstitutional for the reason that Congress has preempted the regulation of fireworks by federal legislation. *Dixie Fireworks Co. v. McArthur*, 218 Ga. 735, 130 S.E.2d 731, 1963 Ga. LEXIS 313 (1963).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

31A Am. Jur. 2d, Explosions and Explosives, §§ 1 et seq., 93 et seq. 51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits, §§ 37, 50 et seq.

C.J.S.

35 C.J.S., Explosives, § 1 et seq. 53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 63 et seq.

ALR.

Bond conditioned for payment of dam-

ages for injury to person or damage to property, given as condition of permission by public for fireworks display or other exhibition or entertainment, as covering non-negligent injury or damage, 138 A.L.R. 936.

25-10-4.1. Prohibition of employment of minors where fireworks are stored or displayed.

No person under the age of 18 shall be employed to work at any magazine, or at any facility containing a magazine, wherein fireworks are stored or to work in any public exhibition or display of fireworks.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-4.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 945, § 5.

25-10-5. License and fee for manufacture, storage, and transportation of fireworks or pyrotechnic displays; regulations; inspections.

The annual license fee for any person, firm, or corporation conducting business in this state under paragraph (4) of Code Section 25-10-3 or storing fireworks under Code Section 25-10-3.1 or conducting pyrotechnic displays under Code Section 25-10-3.2 shall be \$1,500.00 per year, payable to the Safety Fire Commissioner. The license shall expire on December 31 of each year. The Safety Fire Commissioner is authorized and directed to promulgate safety regulations relating to the manufacture, storage, and transportation of fireworks within this state in order to ensure the adequate protection of the employees of any such person, firm, or corporation and of the general public. The Safety Fire Commissioner is also authorized and directed to promulgate safety regulations relating to the public exhibition or display of pyrotechnics and the licensing requirements of those conducting such public exhibitions or displays, as he or she deems necessary. The Safety Fire Commissioner is further authorized and directed to conduct periodic inspections of the facilities of any person, firm, or corporation manufacturing, storing, and transporting fireworks as provided in paragraph (4) of Code Section 25-10-3 or as provided in Code Section 25-10-3.1 in order to ensure compliance with fire safety rules and regulations.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1144, § 2; Ga. L. 1986, p. 798, § 2; Ga. L. 1996, p. 945, § 6; Ga. L. 2003, p. 294, § 4; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-51/HB 1055.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Manufacturing, Storage, Sales, Exhibitions and Displays of Fireworks and Pyrotechnics, Use of Flame Effects Before a Proximate Audience, Official Compilation

of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety, Fire Commissioner and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-22-.01 et seq.

Law reviews.

For note on the 2003 amendment to this Code section, see 20 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2003).

25-10-5.1. Requirements for issuance of license to distribute consumer fireworks; required signage.

(a)(1) A license pursuant to this Code section shall only be issued to a distributor that:

(A) Complies with all the requirements of this chapter; and

(B) Maintains at all times public liability and product liability insurance with minimum coverage limits of \$2 million to cover the losses, damages, or injuries that might ensue to persons or property as a result of selling consumer fireworks.

(2) Any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement of representation in an application executed pursuant to this Code section shall be guilty of a violation of Code Section 16-10-20.

(3) Applications to the Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this Code section shall be upon forms prescribed and promulgated by the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(4) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership seeking a license pursuant to subsection (b) or (d) of this Code section shall have property from which the applicant intends to sell consumer fireworks under such person's, firm's, corporation's, association's, or partnership's ownership or legal control through a lease, rental agreement, licensing agreement, or other contractual instrument at the time of filing the application for such license, and such property shall be in a condition ready for inspection.

(b)(1) The initial license fee for a distributor selling consumer fireworks from a permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility shall be \$1,500.00 per location, payable to the Safety Fire Commissioner; provided, however, that the initial license fee shall be \$5,000.00 for a distributor that is not licensed pursuant to this subsection prior to July 1, 2016. Upon finding that a distributor has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section and upon payment of such license fee, such initial license shall be issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner and shall identify the permanent con-

sumer fireworks retail sales facility applicable to such license. Such initial license shall expire on January 31 of the year after such initial license was issued or as otherwise provided for under this subsection. After such initial license, such distributor may annually renew such initial license, which shall then become an annual license, for \$1,000.00 per year, payable to the Safety Fire Commissioner. Upon finding that a distributor has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section and upon payment of such license fee, such annual license shall be issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner and shall identify the permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility applicable to such license. Such annual license shall expire on January 31 of each year or as otherwise provided for under this subsection; provided, however, that a distributor shall apply for an annual license or renewal of an annual license by December 1 in the year preceding the expiration date of such initial or annual license; and provided, further, that if an initial license is issued to a distributor on or after December 1, then such distributor shall apply for an annual license by the first business day of the next year.

(2) The determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner of whether a distributor has met requirements for the issuance of a license required by this subsection shall be made within 30 days of the submission of an application for any initial or annual license; provided, however, that if a license will expire prior to the expiration of such 30 days and no such determination has been made by the Safety Fire Commissioner, then the expiration date for such license shall be extended until the date of such determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner but for no more than 30 days. If a determination has not been made within the time provided for by this paragraph, or for an appeal of a determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner, a distributor may seek review from the judge of the probate court of the county of the location or proposed location of the permanent consumer fireworks retail sales facility. Such judge may provide for the issuance or nonissuance of a license and for the payment of license fees in such manner as is consistent with the provisions of this subsection.

(c)(1) The license fee for a distributor selling consumer fireworks from a temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand shall be \$500.00 per location, payable to the governing authority of the county, municipality, or other political subdivision of this state in whose boundaries such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand shall be located or is proposed to be located. Upon finding that a distributor has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section, has a license pursuant to subsection (b) or (d) of this Code section, has no more than the allowable temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stands pursuant to subparagraph (b)(6)(B) of Code

Section 25-10-2, that the sales of consumer fireworks from such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand shall accrue to the benefit of a nonprofit group, and upon payment of such license fee, such license shall be issued by the fire department of the county, municipality, or other political subdivision or the chartered fire department legally organized to operate in this state pursuant to Chapter 3 of this title and having operational authority of the area in which such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand shall be located or is proposed to be located. Such license shall identify the temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand applicable to such license and shall expire on the next January 31 after the issuance of such license.

(2) A determination by a fire department as provided for under paragraph (1) of this subsection of whether a distributor has met requirements for the issuance of a license pursuant to this subsection shall be made within 30 days of the submission of an application for any such license. Such application shall be in writing and, if such fire department provides for a written form for the application for a license pursuant to this Code section, upon such form as may be provided by such fire department. If a determination has not been made within the time provided for by this paragraph, or for an appeal of a determination by such fire department, a distributor may seek review from the judge of the probate court of the county of the location or proposed location of the temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand. Such judge may provide for the issuance or nonissuance of a license and for the payment of license fees in such manner as is consistent with the provisions of this subsection.

(3) For at least one of the temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stands provided for under subparagraph (b)(6)(B) of Code Section 25-10-2, a nonprofit group benefiting from the sale of consumer fireworks from such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand shall directly participate in operating such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand. It shall be unlawful for a nonprofit group or any agent or bona fide representative of a nonprofit group to knowingly lend the name of the nonprofit group or allow the identity of the nonprofit group to be used for the license under this subsection if such nonprofit group is not directly participating in operating, or benefiting from the operation of, such temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand.

(4) The governing authority of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision receiving fees pursuant to this Code section shall expend such fees for public safety purposes.

(5) A distributor licensed pursuant to this subsection shall submit a list of the names and addresses, including the counties, of each

temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand at which such distributor has consumer fireworks offered for sale pursuant to this Code section to the Safety Fire Commissioner. Such list shall be submitted not less than 30 days prior to first having a temporary consumer fireworks retail sales stand at which such distributor has consumer fireworks offered for sale and not less than 30 days prior to having such distributor's consumer fireworks offered for sale at a location not previously included on such list. The Safety Fire Commissioner shall make such list publicly available for inspection. In making determinations as provided for under this subsection, fire departments shall reference the list provided for by this paragraph.

(6) A revocation or suspension of a license provided for under subsection (b) or (d) of this Code section shall operate as a revocation or suspension of a distributor's license under this subsection for the term of such revocation or suspension.

(d)(1) The initial license fee for a distributor selling consumer fireworks from a store shall be \$1,500.00 in addition to \$250.00 per store location, payable to the Safety Fire Commissioner. Upon finding that a distributor has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section, such initial license shall be issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner; provided, however, that such distributor has been operating and open to the public no less than 30 days prior to July 4 or December 31 in the year of an application for an initial license that is filed within 30 days of July 4 or December 31; and provided, further, that a distributor holding an initial license may add additional store locations to such license prior to the expiration of such license upon payment of \$250.00 per added store location. Such initial license shall expire on January 31 of the year after such initial license was issued or as otherwise provided for under this subsection. After such initial license, such distributor may annually renew such initial license, which shall then become an annual license, for \$1,000.00 in addition to \$100.00 per store location, payable to the Safety Fire Commissioner; provided, however, that a distributor holding an annual license may add additional store locations to such license prior to the expiration of such license upon payment of \$250.00 per added store location. Upon finding that a distributor has met the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section, such annual license shall be issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner. Such annual license shall expire on January 31 of each year or as otherwise provided for under this subsection; provided, however, that a distributor shall apply for an annual license or renewal of an annual license by December 1 in the year preceding the expiration date of such initial or annual license; and provided, further, that if an initial license is issued to a distributor on or after December 1, then such distributor shall apply for an annual license by the first business day of the next year.

(2) An application submitted under this subsection shall identify each store location to which an initial or annual license is applicable; there shall not be a requirement for a separate application for each of the several store locations. The determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner of whether a distributor has met requirements for the issuance of a license required by this subsection shall be made within 30 days of the submission of an application for any initial or annual license; provided, however, that if a license will expire prior to the expiration of such 30 days and no such determination has been made by the Safety Fire Commissioner, then the expiration date for such license shall be extended until the date of such determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner but for no more than 30 days. If a determination has not been made within the time provided for by this paragraph, or for an appeal of a determination by the Safety Fire Commissioner, a distributor may seek review from the judge of the probate court of the county of the location or proposed location of the store from which consumer fireworks will be sold. Such judge may provide for the issuance or nonissuance of a license and for the payment of license fees in such manner as is consistent with the provisions of this subsection.

(e)(1) Every licensed distributor selling consumer fireworks pursuant to this Code section shall have within the retail display area for consumer fireworks at least one sign providing the following information:

(A) “PLEASE CHECK YOUR LOCAL ORDINANCES PRIOR TO USING OR IGNITING CONSUMER FIREWORKS”;

(B) “PLEASE USE CONSUMER FIREWORKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR AFFIXED CAUTION AND WARNING LABELS”; and

(C) “PLEASE BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR AND BE MINDFUL THAT UNANNOUNCED IGNITION NEAR SOME MILITARY VETERANS AND OTHER PERSONS AND NEAR SOME PETS CAN BE TRAUMATIC”.

(2) Such signs shall be at least 22 inches by 28 inches in size, be printed in at least 40 point boldface type in a color contrasting from such sign’s background color, and kept free from obstruction and in plain sight of customers.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-5.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2015, p. 274, § 4/HB 110; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 9/HB 727; Ga. L. 2018, p. 181, § 2/HB 419.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

25-10-6. Fireworks manufactured, sold, or stored in violation of chapter declared contraband; seizure and disposition thereof; forfeiture.

(a) The state fire marshal shall enforce the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, that, in addition, any law enforcement officer or agency of this state or political subdivision thereof may enforce provisions relating to using or igniting or causing to be ignited consumer fireworks. Applicable fire departments of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision or a chartered fire department shall refer cases for enforcement under subsection (c) of Code Section 25-10-5.1 to the state fire marshal. All fireworks or consumer fireworks manufactured, offered for sale, exposed for sale, or stored in violation of this chapter are declared to be contraband and may be seized, taken, and removed, or caused to be removed and destroyed or disposed of at the expense of the owner thereof by the state fire marshal, the Georgia State Patrol, or any sheriff or local police official.

(b) Any property declared as contraband pursuant to this Code section shall be forfeited in accordance with the procedures set forth in Chapter 16 of Title 9.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 6; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 5; Ga. L. 2015, p. 274, § 5/HB 110; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 10/HB 727.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Enforcement of fireworks regulations by Georgia State Patrol. — Georgia State Patrol may seize fireworks which they find, declare them contraband, and destroy them even though found off the highways of this state, but any arrest made off the highways would have to be

accomplished by the local authorities; however, any violation of the terms of Ga. L. 1955, p. 550 (see now O.C.G.A. 25-10-1 et seq.) observed on the highways may give rise to proper arrest by the members of the state patrol. 1962 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 431.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Lawfulness of seizure of property used in violation of law as prerequisite to for-

feiture action or proceeding, 8 A.L.R.3d 473.

25-10-7. Applicability of provisions of chapter.

This chapter shall not apply to the high explosives covered by Code Section 25-2-17 over which the Safety Fire Commissioner has regulatory control.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 8; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 8; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 25.

25-10-8. Penalty for violations of chapter.

(a) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership that violates Code Section 25-10-3.2 shall be guilty of a felony and shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than ten years, or by a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both.

(b) Any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership that violates any other provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1955, p. 550, § 7; Ga. L. 1962, p. 11, § 6; Ga. L. 2003, p. 294, § 5.

Code section, see 20 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2003).

Law reviews.

For note on the 2003 amendment to this

25-10-9. Penalty for illegal use or sale of fireworks.

Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, the Safety Fire Commissioner shall have the authority to subject any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership that knowingly violates this chapter to a monetary penalty of up to \$2,500.00 for each and every act in violation of this chapter; provided, however, that the Safety Fire Commissioner shall have the authority to subject any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership that knowingly sells consumer fireworks from a tent, canopy, or membrane structure to a monetary penalty of up to \$5,000.00 and, if any such person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership is a distributor, then a license revocation for not more than two years. Each sales transaction in violation of this chapter shall be a separate offense.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-9, enacted by Ga. L. 2005, p. 596, § 3/SB 133; Ga. L. 2015, p. 274, § 6/HB 110; Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 11/HB 727.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 amendment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

25-10-10. Prohibition on release of certain fire-propelled devices into the air and certain floating lantern devices into public water locations.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or partnership to release or cause to be released any balloon, bag, parachute, or other similar device which requires fire underneath for propulsion or to release or cause to be released any floating water

lantern or wish lantern which uses a flame to create a lighting effect in any public waterway, lake, pond, stream, or river.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-10, enacted by Ga.
L. 2015, p. 274, § 7/HB 110.

25-10-11. Enforcement; cease and desist orders; license revocation; opportunity for hearing; penalty for failure to comply with order; authority to bring civil action.

(a) Whenever the Safety Fire Commissioner shall have reason to believe that any person is or has been violating any provisions of this chapter, the Safety Fire Commissioner, his or her deputy, his or her assistant, or other designated persons may issue and deliver to the person an order to cease and desist such violation. An order issued under this Code section shall be delivered in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of this Code section.

(b) Violation of any provision of this chapter or failure to comply with a cease and desist order is cause for revocation of any or all licenses issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner for a period of not less than six months and not to exceed five years. If a new license has been issued to the person so charged, the order of revocation shall operate effectively with respect to such new license held by such person. In the case of an applicant for a license, violation of any provision of this title or regulations promulgated thereunder may constitute grounds for refusal of the application. Decisions under this subsection may be appealed as provided by law.

(c) Any order issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner under this chapter shall contain or be accompanied by a notice of opportunity for hearing which shall provide that a hearing will be held if and only if a person subject to the order requests a hearing in writing within ten days of receipt of the order and notice. The order and notice shall be served by delivery by the Safety Fire Commissioner or his or her agent or by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested. Any person who fails to comply with any order under this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be punished by law.

(d) In addition to other powers granted to the Safety Fire Commissioner under this chapter, the Safety Fire Commissioner may bring a civil action to enjoin a violation of any provision of this chapter or of any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Safety Fire Commissioner under this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-11, enacted by Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 12/HB 727.

this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 enactment of

25-10-12. Additional grounds for revocation or suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal of license.

(a) In addition to the grounds set forth in Code Section 25-10-11, it is cause for revocation or suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal by the Safety Fire Commissioner of any license issued under this chapter if it is determined that the licensee or applicant has:

(1) Failed to comply with all the requirements of this chapter or the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto;

(2) Failed to maintain the minimum insurance coverage as set forth in this chapter;

(3) Made a material misstatement or misrepresentation or committed a fraud in obtaining or attempting to obtain a license; or

(4) Failed to notify the Safety Fire Commissioner, in writing, within 30 days after a change of residence, principal business address, or name.

(b) In addition to other grounds set forth in this Code section, the Safety Fire Commissioner shall not issue a new license under this chapter if the Safety Fire Commissioner finds that the circumstance or circumstances for which the license was previously suspended or revoked still exist or are likely to recur.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-10-12, enacted by Ga. L. 2016, p. 64, § 12/HB 727.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2016, “within” was substituted for “with” in paragraph (a)(4).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2016 enactment of this Code section, see 33 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 55 (2016).

CHAPTER 11

REGULATION OF FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND PROFESSIONALS

Sec.		Sec.	
25-11-1.	Short title.	25-11-12.	Rules and regulations; forms.
25-11-2.	Definitions.	25-11-13.	Valid license required for installation or repair of water-based fire protection systems.
25-11-3.	Powers and duties of the Commissioner; delegation of authority.	25-11-14.	Applicability to work performed for state or political subdivision; contract and bid requirements for such work.
25-11-4.	Certificate of competency.	25-11-15.	Deposit of fees collected under chapter; authority to accept grants for administration of chapter.
25-11-5.	Fire protection sprinkler contractor license.	25-11-16.	Issuance of orders; penalties; injunctions.
25-11-6.	Fire protection system inspector license.	25-11-17.	Additional grounds for revocation, suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal of licenses.
25-11-7.	Fire protection system designer license.	25-11-18.	Failure to renew certificate or license.
25-11-8.	Requirement that installation, repair, or other work be performed or supervised by certificate holder.	25-11-19.	Systems exempt from chapter.
25-11-9.	Review of water-based fire protection shop drawings.		
25-11-10.	Preparation of water-based fire protection system documents for construction by designers.		
25-11-11.	Individuals authorized to inspect and maintain fire protection systems.		

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.

Negligent Failure to Install or Maintain Smoke Alarm or Sprinkler System, 5 POF3d 383.

ALR.

Liability of person furnishing, install-

ing, or servicing burglary or fire alarm system for burglary or fire loss, 37 A.L.R.4th 47.

25-11-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Fire Sprinkler Act."

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-1, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 128, § 25.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Enforcement of the Georgia Fire Sprinkler Act, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commis-

sioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-19-.01 et seq.

25-11-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) "Certificate" or "certificate of competency" means the document issued by the Commissioner to a certificate holder who has demonstrated adequate technical knowledge and ability to design in accordance with recognized standards as adopted by the Commissioner and to perform and supervise the installation, repair, alteration, addition, maintenance, or inspection of water-based fire protection systems.

(2) "Certificate holder" means an individual who has been issued a certificate of competency by the Commissioner.

(3) "Commissioner" means the Georgia Safety Fire Commissioner.

(4) "Fire protection sprinkler contractor" means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, or joint venture that supervises, performs, or supervises and performs the installation, repair, alteration, addition, maintenance, or inspection of water-based fire protection systems. Such term does not include local building officials, fire inspectors, or insurance inspectors when acting in their official capacities.

(5) "Fire protection sprinkler contractor license" means the document issued by the Commissioner to the fire protection sprinkler contractor which authorizes the fire protection sprinkler contractor to engage in the business of fabrication, installation, repair, alteration, maintenance, or inspection of water-based fire protection systems.

(6) "Fire protection sprinkler system" means an integrated system of overhead and underground piping designed in accordance with fire protection engineering standards. The installation includes one or more automatic water supplies. The portion of the system above-ground is a network of specially sized or hydraulically designed piping installed in a building, structure, or area, generally overhead, to which sprinklers are attached in a systematic pattern. The valve controlling each system riser is located in the system riser or its supply piping. The system is usually activated by heat from a fire and discharges water over the fire area.

(7) "Fire protection system designer" means a person who develops documents pertaining to water-based fire protection systems.

(8) "Fire protection system designer license" means a document issued by the Commissioner which authorizes the fire protection

system designer to engage in the business of producing construction shop drawings pertaining to water-based fire protection systems.

(9) “Fire protection system inspector” means an individual who performs inspections only on water-based fire protection systems in accordance with applicable codes and standards as adopted by the Commissioner. Such term does not apply to state, local, and insurance inspectors while acting in their official capacities.

(10) “Fire protection system inspector’s license” means a document issued by the Commissioner which authorizes the fire protection system inspector to engage in the business of inspecting water-based fire protection systems.

(11) “Fire pump” means a pump supplying water at the flow and pressure required by water-based fire protection systems.

(12) “Foam-water spray system” means a special system pipe connected to a source of foam concentrate and to a water supply and equipped with foam-water spray nozzles for fire protection agent discharge (foam and water sequentially in that order or in reverse order) and distribution over the area to be protected. System operation arrangements parallel those for foam-water sprinkler systems.

(13) “Foam-water sprinkler system” means a special system pipe connected to a source of foam concentrates and to a water supply and equipped with appropriate discharge devices for fire protection agent discharge and distribution over the area to be protected. The piping system is connected to the water supply through a control valve that is usually actuated by operation of automatic detection equipment installed in the same area as the sprinklers. When this valve opens, water flows into the piping system, and foam concentrate is injected into the water. The resulting foam solution discharging through the discharge devices generates and distributes foam. Upon exhaustion of the foam concentrate supply, water discharge will follow the foam and continue until manually shut off. Existing deluge sprinkler systems that have been converted to the use of aqueous film forming foam are classified as foam-water sprinkler systems.

(14) “Inspection” means a visual examination of a water-based fire protection system or portion thereof to verify that it appears to be in operating condition and is free of physical damage.

(15) “Maintenance” means work performed to keep equipment operable or to make repairs without altering the operation of the water-based system.

(16) “Private fire service main” means that pipe and its appurtenances on private property that are:

(A) Between a source of water and the base of the system riser for water-based fire protection systems;

(B) Between a source of water and inlets to foam-making systems;

(C) Between a source of water and the base elbow of private hydrants or monitor nozzles;

(D) Used as fire pump suction and discharge piping outside of a building; and

(E) Beginning at the inlet side of the check valve on a gravity or pressure tank.

(17) “Private water tank” means a tank supplying water for water-based fire protection systems which is located on private property.

(18) “Standpipe system” means an arrangement of piping, valves, hose connections, and allied equipment installed in a building or structure with the hose connections located in such a manner that water can be discharged in streams or spray patterns through attached hoses and nozzles for the purpose of extinguishing a fire, thus protecting a building or structure, its contents, and its occupants. This is accomplished by connection to water supply systems or by pumps, tanks, and other equipment necessary to provide an adequate supply of water-to-hose connections.

(19) “Testing” means a procedure to determine the status of a system as intended by conducting periodic physical checks on water-based fire protection systems such as waterflow tests, fire pump tests, alarm tests, and trip tests of dry pipe, deluge, or preaction valves. These tests follow up on the original acceptance test at intervals specified in the appropriate standards related to such systems.

(20) “Water-based fire protection system” means any one system or any combination of a number of systems designed to deliver water to an apparatus designed to extinguish or retard the advancement of fire. Such systems include fire protection sprinkler systems, standpipe systems, private fire service mains, fire pumps, private water tanks, water spray fixed systems, foam-water spray systems, and foam-water sprinkler systems. The term “fire sprinkler system” is used interchangeably with this term.

(21) “Water-spray fixed system” means a special fixed pipe system connected to a reliable fire protection water supply and equipped with water-spray nozzles for specific water discharge and distribution over the surface or area to be protected. The piping system is connected to the water supply through an automatically or manually activated

valve that initiates the flow of water. An automatic valve is actuated by operation of automatic detection equipment installed in the same area as the water-spray nozzles.

History. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 1124, Code 1981, § 25-11-2, enacted by Ga. L. § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-3. Powers and duties of the Commissioner; delegation of authority.

(a) The Commissioner is charged with the duty and responsibility for the enforcement of this chapter.

(b) Any authority, power, or duty vested in the Commissioner by any provision of this chapter may be exercised, discharged, or performed by any deputy, assistant, or other designated employee acting in the Commissioner's name and by his or her delegated authority.

(c) The Commissioner may, at his or her discretion, have the competency and license test prepared by others.

(d) The Commissioner is authorized to enter into a reciprocal agreement with the state fire commissioner or state fire marshal of other states for the waiver of the competency test of any applicant resident in such other jurisdiction, provided that:

(1) The laws of the other jurisdiction are substantially similar to this chapter; and

(2) The applicant has no place of business within this state nor is an officer, director, stockholder, or partner in any corporation or partnership doing business in this jurisdiction as a fire protection sprinkler contractor.

History. 1997, "state fire commissioner" was substituted for "State Fire Commissioner" in the introductory language of subsection (d).
Code 1981, § 25-11-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 824, § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-11-4. Certificate of competency.

(a) Any individual desiring to become a certificate holder shall submit to the Commissioner a completed application on forms prescribed by the Commissioner. Such individual shall remit with his or her application a nonrefundable certificate fee of \$150.00 plus a one-time filing fee of \$75.00. Such fee shall not be prorated for portions of a year.

(b) Prior to obtaining a certificate, the applicant shall demonstrate

his or her competence and knowledge of water-based fire protection systems by:

(1) Successfully completing a competency test by means prescribed by rules and regulations as adopted and promulgated by the Commissioner; or

(2) Submitting to the Commissioner a certification from either the state fire commissioner or state fire marshal of another jurisdiction whenever a reciprocal agreement has been entered into between the two jurisdictions pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(c)(1) If the applicant has paid the required fees and has met one of the requirements of subsection (b) of this Code section, the Commissioner shall issue a certificate of competency in the name of the applicant, unless such applicant has been cited under other provisions of this chapter. Such certificate shall expire annually as determined by the rules and regulations and shall be nontransferable.

(2) In no case shall a certificate holder be allowed to obtain a certificate of competency for more than one fire protection sprinkler contractor or more than one office location at a time. If the certificate holder should leave the employment of a fire protection sprinkler contractor or change office locations, he or she must notify the Commissioner in writing within 30 days.

(d) A certificate holder desiring to renew his or her certificate shall submit a renewal application to the Commissioner and remit therewith a renewal fee of \$100.00 on or before the date determined by the rules and regulations of each year. If the state minimum fire safety standards regarding the installation or maintenance of fire protection sprinkler systems or water-spray systems promulgated by the Commissioner have been revised since the date the certificate holder's expiring certificate was issued, the Commissioner may, upon 30 days' notice, require the certificate holder to again meet one of the requirements of subsection (b) of this Code section prior to the renewal of his or her certificate.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-4, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 824, § 2; Ga. L. 1989, p. 1124, § 2; Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-52/HB 1055.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1997, "state fire commissioner" was substituted for "state fire Commissioner" in paragraph (b)(2).

25-11-5. Fire protection sprinkler contractor license.

(a) Where a fire protection sprinkler contractor has multiple office locations for the purpose of design, installation, repair, alteration,

addition, maintenance, or inspection of water-based fire protection systems, each location shall be licensed under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) Any organization or individual desiring to become a fire protection sprinkler contractor shall submit to the Commissioner a completed application on forms prescribed by him or her. Such organization or individual shall remit with his or her application a nonrefundable license fee of \$100.00 plus a one-time filing fee of \$75.00. Such fee shall not be prorated for portions of a year.

(c) Prior to obtaining a sprinkler contractor's license, the applicant shall:

(1) Submit to the Commissioner a copy of any and all certificate of competency holders' certificates employed by the applicant; and

(2) Submit to the Commissioner proof of comprehensive liability insurance coverage. The liability insurance policy shall provide coverage in an amount not less than \$1 million and shall cover any loss to property or personal injury caused by the fire protection sprinkler contractor. The policy must be purchased from an insurer authorized to do business in Georgia.

(d) A fire protection sprinkler contractor license shall expire annually as determined by the rules and regulations. A license holder desiring to renew his or her license shall submit a renewal application to the Commissioner and remit a renewal fee of \$75.00 on or before the date determined by the rules and regulations of each year.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-53/HB 1055.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July 1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-5 as present Code Section 25-11-8.

25-11-6. Fire protection system inspector license.

(a) Any individual desiring to become a fire protection system inspector shall submit to the Commissioner a completed application on the prescribed forms. Such individual shall remit with his or her application a nonrefundable license fee of \$100.00 plus a one-time filing fee of \$75.00. Such fees shall not be prorated for portions of a year.

(b) Prior to obtaining a license, the applicant shall demonstrate his or her competence and employment by a sprinkler contractor by:

(1) Successfully completing a competency test by means prescribed by rules and regulations as adopted and promulgated by the Commissioner; and

(2) Submitting to the Commissioner proof of employment by a

sprinkler contractor who has comprehensive liability insurance coverage. The liability insurance policy shall provide coverage in an amount not less than \$1 million and shall cover any loss to property or personal injury caused by the fire protection system inspector. The policy must be purchased from an insurer authorized to do business in Georgia.

(c) A fire protection system inspector license shall expire annually as determined by the rules and regulations. A license holder desiring to renew his or her license shall submit a renewal application to the Commissioner and remit a renewal fee of \$75.00 on or before the date determined by the rules and regulations of each year.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-54/HB 1055; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(a)(3)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “fire protection system inspector” for “fire protection sprinkler system inspector” in the

first sentence of subsections (a) and (c), and substituted “fire protection system inspector” for “fire protection sprinkler inspector” at the end of the second sentence of paragraph (b)(2).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July 1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-6 as present Code Section 25-11-12.

25-11-7. Fire protection system designer license.

(a) Any individual desiring to become a fire protection system designer shall submit to the Commissioner a completed application on forms prescribed by the Commissioner. Such individual shall remit with his or her application a nonrefundable license fee of \$100.00 plus a one-time filing fee of \$75.00. Such fee shall not be prorated for portions of a year.

(b) Prior to obtaining a license, the applicant shall demonstrate his or her competence and knowledge of water-based fire protection systems by means prescribed by rules and regulations as adopted and promulgated by the Commissioner or as set forth in Chapter 15 of Title 43.

(c) A fire protection system designer license shall expire annually as determined by the rules and regulations. A license holder desiring to renew his or her license shall submit a renewal application to the Commissioner and remit a renewal fee of \$75.00 on or before the date determined by the rules and regulations of each year.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 128, § 25; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-55/HB 1055.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July 1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-7 as present Code Section 25-11-13.

25-11-8. Requirement that installation, repair, or other work be performed or supervised by certificate holder.

(a) No person shall act as a fire protection sprinkler contractor unless a certificate holder is employed full time, in office or on site or combination thereof, to supervise or perform the installation, repair, alteration, addition, maintenance, or inspection of water-based fire protection systems.

(b) If the only certificate holder employed by a fire protection sprinkler contractor leaves the employment of the fire protection contractor, the contractor shall notify the Commissioner in writing within 30 days. A new certificate holder must be employed by a fire protection sprinkler contractor within 30 days of such notice.

(c) No fire protection sprinkler contractor shall permit any person under his or her employment or control to install, repair, alter, maintain, or inspect any water-based fire protection system unless such person is a certificate holder or is under the direct supervision of a certificate holder employed by the contractor.

(d) Only fire protection sprinkler contractors or certificate of competency holders shall alter or renovate water-based fire protection systems except as otherwise provided by this chapter.

(e) Individuals employed by the building owner or a representative of the building owner may repair leaks, replace broken fittings, or perform other routine maintenance that does not alter the piping arrangement or operation of a water-based fire protection system.

(f) Installations shall conform to codes as adopted by the Commissioner unless otherwise permitted by this chapter or the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(g) It shall be unlawful for any person to begin installation of a fire sprinkler system on any proposed or existing building or structure which comes under the classification in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-2-13 or which comes under the jurisdiction of the office of the Commissioner of Insurance pursuant to Code Section 25-2-12 without first having drawings of the designed system approved by the appropriate authority having jurisdiction unless otherwise provided by the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-11-8, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 25/HB 90.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July 1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-8 as present Code Section 25-11-14.

25-11-9. Review of water-based fire protection shop drawings.

(a) Water-based fire protection shop drawings shall be reviewed for code compliance with the state minimum standards by a certificate of competency holder.

(b) The reviewing certificate holder's signature, printed name, and certificate number indicating such compliance shall be indicated on submitted plans.

(c) Noncode compliance dictated by bid documents shall be reported by means prescribed by the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-9 as present Code Section 25-11-15.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July

25-11-10. Preparation of water-based fire protection system documents for construction by designers.

(a) Only licensed fire protection system designers or other designers under their direct supervision shall prepare water-based fire protection system documents for construction.

(b) All documents shall be representative of code complying water-based fire protection systems unless otherwise permitted by the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

(c) The licensed fire protection system designer's signature, printed name, and license number shall be indicated on the shop drawings.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-10 as present Code Section 25-11-16.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July

25-11-11. Individuals authorized to inspect and maintain fire protection systems.

(a) Inspections, maintenance, and testing required by this chapter shall only be performed by licensed fire protection system inspectors, certificate of competency holders, or representatives of the building owner. Representatives of the building owner shall indicate in writing to the authority having jurisdiction their intent to do such inspections and provide to the authority having jurisdiction proof of knowledge and expertise pertaining to the systems inspected as specified in the rules

and regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter. Said representatives of the building owner are exempt from the license requirements specified in Code Section 25-11-6.

(b) Duly authorized manufacturers' representatives while acting in their official capacities are exempt from this chapter.

(c) Inspections and maintenance of water-based fire protection systems owned by a firm, business, or corporation and installed on property under control of the firm, business, or corporation may be performed by an employee of the firm, business, or corporation provided annual inspection and maintenance of the water-based system are performed by a current certificate of competency holder or inspector as defined in this chapter. Said employees are exempt from the license requirements specified in Code Section 25-11-6.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-11, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

1, 1997, renumbered former Code Section 25-11-11 as present Code Section 25-11-19.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1, effective July

25-11-12. Rules and regulations; forms.

The Commissioner may promulgate such rules and regulations as he or she deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. The Commissioner may also prescribe the forms required for the administration of this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-11-12,

as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-13. Valid license required for installation or repair of water-based fire protection systems.

(a) The installation or repair of any underground facilities or piping which connects to and furnishes water for the water-based fire protection system shall be performed only by a licensed utility contractor, fire protection sprinkler contractor, or licensed plumber in accordance with the minimum fire safety standards adopted by the Commissioner. The installing contractor shall be responsible for the installation of proper underground facilities and piping which provide an adequate flow of water from the fire protection water supply to the water-based fire protection system.

(b) Evidence of inspection shall be given to the owner or his or her representative in the form of a letter indicating the inspector or certificate of competency holder and the license number or certificate number.

(c) Before any local building official shall issue any license or building permit which authorizes the construction of any building or structure containing a water-based fire protection system, such local official shall require a copy of a valid fire protection sprinkler contractor license from the fire protection sprinkler contractor. The fire protection sprinkler contractor shall be required to pay any fees normally imposed for local licenses or permits, but the local official shall impose no requirements on the fire protection sprinkler contractor to prove competency other than proper evidence of a valid certificate of competency, as issued by the Commissioner.

(d) Nothing in this chapter limits the power of a municipality, county, or the state to require the submission and approval of plans and specifications or to regulate the quality and character of work performed by contractors through a system of permits, fees, and inspections otherwise authorized by law for the protection of the public health and safety.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1317, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-11-13, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-14. Applicability to work performed for state or political subdivision; contract and bid requirements for such work.

This chapter shall also apply to any fire protection sprinkler contractor performing work for the state or any municipality, county, or other political subdivision. Officials of the state or any municipality, county, or other political subdivision are required to determine compliance with this chapter before awarding any contracts for the installation, repair, alteration, addition, maintenance, or inspection of a water-based fire protection system. Bids tendered for such contracts shall be accompanied by a copy of a valid certificate of competency.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-8, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-11-14, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-15. Deposit of fees collected under chapter; authority to accept grants for administration of chapter.

(a) All fees collected pursuant to the provisions of this chapter shall be deposited with the Fiscal Division of the Department of Administrative Services.

(b) The Commissioner shall be authorized to receive grants for the administration of this chapter from parties interested in upgrading and improving the quality of water-based fire protection systems, education

of the public pertaining to water-based fire protection systems, or the upgrading of fire protection, in general, in Georgia.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1993, p. 1402, § 18; Code 1981, § 25-11-15, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-16. Issuance of orders; penalties; injunctions.

(a) Whenever the Commissioner shall have reason to believe that any individual is or has been violating any provisions of this chapter, the Commissioner, his or her deputy, his or her assistant, or other designated persons may issue and deliver to the individual an order to cease and desist such violation. An order issued under this Code section may be delivered in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this Code section.

(b) Violation of any provision of this chapter or failure to comply with a cease and desist order is cause for revocation of any or all certificates and licenses issued by the Commissioner for a period of not less than six months and not to exceed five years. If a new certificate or license has been issued to the person so charged, the order of revocation shall operate effectively with respect to such new certificates and licenses held by such person. In the case of an applicant for a license, certificate, or permit, violation of any provision of this title or regulations promulgated thereunder may constitute grounds for refusal of the application. Decisions under this subsection may be appealed as provided by law.

(c) Any person who violates any provision of this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Commissioner of not more than \$1,000.00 for a first offense, not less than \$1,000.00 and not more than \$2,000.00 for a second offense, and not less than \$2,000.00 or more than \$5,000.00 for a third or subsequent offense. Prior to subjecting any person or entity to a fine under this subsection, the Commissioner or his or her agent shall give written notice to the person or entity by hand delivery or by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested, of the existence of the violations. After a reasonable period of time after notice is given, an order may be issued based on this Code section. Such order must be delivered in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this Code section and must notify the person or entity of the right to a hearing with respect to same.

(d) Any order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall contain or be accompanied by a notice of opportunity for hearing which may provide that a hearing will be held if and only if a person subject to the order requests a hearing within ten days of receipt of the order

and notice. The order and notice shall be served by delivery by the Commissioner or his or her agent or by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested. Any person who fails to comply with any order under this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be punished by law.

(e) In addition to other powers granted to the Commissioner under this chapter, the Commissioner may bring a civil action to enjoin a violation of any provision of this chapter or of any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 1124, § 2; Code 1981, § 25-11-16, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 128, § 25; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 3; Ga. L. 2014, p. 385, § 1/SB 325.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 16, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that the amendment to subsection (d) is applicable with respect to notices delivered on or after July 1, 2000.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fingerprinting of offenders. — Offense covered by O.C.G.A. § 25-11-16(d) is not currently designated as an offense

requiring fingerprinting. 1997 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 97-330.

25-11-17. Additional grounds for revocation, suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal of licenses.

In addition to the grounds set forth in Code Section 25-11-16, it is cause for revocation or suspension, refusal, or nonrenewal of certificates or licenses by the Commissioner if it is determined that the holder or applicant has:

(1) Rendered inoperative a water-based fire protection system covered by this chapter, except during a reasonable time during which the system is being repaired, altered, added to, maintained, inspected, or except pursuant to a court order;

(2) Falsified any record required to be maintained by this chapter or rules or regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter or current fire codes enforced by the Commissioner;

(3) Improperly installed, repaired, serviced, modified, altered, inspected, or tested a water-based fire protection system;

(4) While holding a certificate or license, allowed another person to use the certificate or license or certificate number or license number other than his or her own valid certificate or license or certificate number or license number;

(5) While holding a certificate or license, used a certificate or license or certificate number or license number other than his or her

own valid certificate or license or certificate number or license number;

(6) Used credentials, methods, means, or practices to impersonate a representative of the Commissioner or the state fire marshal or any local fire chief, fire marshal, or other fire authority having jurisdiction;

(7) Failed to maintain the minimum insurance coverage as set forth in this chapter;

(8) Failed to obtain, retain, or maintain one or more of the qualifications and requirements to obtain a certificate of competency or other licenses required by this chapter;

(9) Installed, serviced, modified, altered, inspected, maintained, added to, or tested a water-based fire protection system without a current, valid license or certificate, when such license or certificate is required by this chapter;

(10) Made a material misstatement or misrepresentation or committed a fraud in obtaining or attempting to obtain a license or certificate; or

(11) Failed to notify the Commissioner, in writing, with 30 days after a change of residence, principal business address, or name.

In addition to other grounds set forth in this Code section, the Commissioner shall not issue a new license or certificate if the Commissioner finds that the circumstance or circumstances for which the license or certificate was previously suspended or revoked still exist or are likely to recur.

History. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1; Ga. L. 2014, p. 385,
Code 1981, § 25-11-17, enacted by Ga. § 2/SB 325.

25-11-18. Failure to renew certificate or license.

The failure to renew a certificate or license by the expiration date as set forth in this chapter will cause the certificate or license to become inoperative. A certificate or license which is inoperative because of the failure to renew it shall be restored upon payment of the applicable fee plus a penalty of not more than \$250.00 if said fees are paid within 90 days of expiration. After 90 days new certificates and licenses must be applied for as required for an initial certificate or license.

History.
Code 1981, § 25-11-18, enacted by Ga.
L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

25-11-19. Systems exempt from chapter.

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to water-based automatic sprinkler systems for use in single-family dwellings or limited water-based systems permitted to be connected directly to a domestic water supply system as allowed by the NFPA Life Safety Code adopted by the Commissioner's rules and regulations.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-11-11, enacted by Ga. L. 1982, p. 1212, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-11-19, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1997, p. 1698, § 1.

CHAPTER 12

REGULATION OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS

Sec.		Sec.	
25-12-1.	Compliance with chapter; license requirement.	25-12-11.	Requirements for issuance of license.
25-12-2.	Definitions.	25-12-12.	Nonrefundable filing fee required for first permit.
25-12-3.	Fire suppression systems; license required.	25-12-13.	Amended licenses or permits.
25-12-4.	Portable fire extinguishers; license required.	25-12-14.	Production of license or permit on demand.
25-12-5.	Exemption for routine visual inspections of preengineered fire protection devices.	25-12-15.	Rules and regulations for standards.
25-12-6.	Exemption for routine visual inspections of self-owned fire protection devices; exemption from fees.	25-12-16.	Specifications for service tags.
25-12-7.	License required for work related to fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers; maximum fee.	25-12-17.	Violation of chapter by licensee or permittee.
25-12-8.	Permit required for work related to fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers; maximum fee.	25-12-18.	Cease and desist orders; period of revocation; civil penalty; opportunity for hearing; civil actions.
25-12-9.	Period of licenses and permits; failure to renew.	25-12-19.	Penalty for violation of chapter.
25-12-10.	Forms of licenses, permits, and applications.	25-12-20.	Delegation of authority by the Commissioner.
		25-12-21.	Fees collected; grants and gifts.
		25-12-22.	Power of municipality, county, or state to regulate not limited.

25-12-1. Compliance with chapter; license requirement.

It is unlawful for any firm to engage in the business of installing, inspecting, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing of portable fire extinguishers or fire suppression systems, as defined by this chapter, in this state except in conformity with the provisions of this chapter. Each firm engaging in any such business must possess a valid and subsisting license issued by the Commissioner. Such license shall not be required for any firm or governmental entity that engages only in installing, inspecting, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing of portable fire extinguishers or fire suppression systems owned by the firm and installed on property under the control of said firm. Such firms shall remain subject to the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-1, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 558, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

For an update of crimes and offenses for which the Georgia Crime Information Center is authorized to collect and

file identifying data, see 1991 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 91-35.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fires, § 1 et seq.

25-12-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(2) “Engineered fire suppression system” means any fire suppression system having pipe lengths, number of fittings, number and types of nozzles, suppression agent flow rates, and nozzle pressures as determined by calculations derived from the appropriate standards of the National Fire Protection Association, whether those calculations are performed by hand or by a computer program or by other method of calculation. These systems may consist of other components, including, but not limited to, detection devices, alarm devices, and control devices as tested and approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory and shall be manufacturer listed as compatible with the fire suppression system involved.

(3) “Fire suppression system” means any fire-fighting system employing a suppression agent with the purpose of controlling, suppressing, or extinguishing a fire in a specific hazard. The suppression agent shall be a currently recognized agent or water additive required to control, suppress, or extinguish a fire. The term fire suppression system shall include engineered and preengineered systems as defined in this chapter and shall not include those systems addressed in Chapter 11 of this title.

(4) “Firm” means any business, person, partnership, organization, association, corporation, contractor, subcontractor, or individual.

(5) “License” means the document issued by the Commissioner which authorizes a firm to engage in the business of installation, repair, alteration, recharging, inspection, maintenance, service, or testing of fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers.

(6) “Permit” means the document issued by the Commissioner which authorizes an individual to install, inspect, repair, recharge, service, or test fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers.

(7) “Portable fire extinguisher” means a portable device containing an extinguishing agent that can be expelled under pressure for the purpose of suppressing or extinguishing a fire. The device must be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. The device must bear a manufacturer’s name and serial number. The listings, approvals, and serial numbers may be stamped on the manufacturer’s identification and instruction plate or on a separate plate of the testing laboratory soldered or attached to the extinguisher shell in a permanent manner set forth by the listing or approving organization.

(8) “Preengineered fire suppression system” means any system having predetermined flow rates, nozzle pressures, and quantities of an extinguishing agent. These systems have the specific pipe size, maximum and minimum pipe lengths, flexible hose specifications, number of fittings, and number and types of nozzles prescribed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. The hazards protected by these systems are specifically limited as to the type and size by the testing laboratory based upon actual fire tests. Limitations on hazards that can be protected by these systems are contained in the manufacturer’s installation manual, which is referenced as part of the listing.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-2, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 656, § 1.

25-12-3. Fire suppression systems; license required.

All fire suppression systems required by the Commissioner’s rules and regulations or by other state or local fire safety rules or regulations must be installed, inspected, repaired, recharged, serviced, or tested only by a firm licensed under the provisions of this chapter, except as otherwise provided by this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-4. Portable fire extinguishers; license required.

All portable fire extinguishers required by the Commissioner’s rules and regulations or by other state or local fire safety rules or regulations must be installed, inspected, repaired, recharged, serviced, or tested only by a firm licensed under the provisions of this chapter, except as otherwise provided by this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-4, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Installation; Inspection; Recharging, Repairing, Ser-

ving, and Testing of Portable Fire Extinguishers or Fire Suppression Systems, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office

of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-23-.01 et seq.

25-12-5. Exemption for routine visual inspections of preengineered fire protection devices.

The provisions of this chapter do not apply to fire chiefs, fire marshals, fire inspectors, or insurance company inspectors with regard to the routine visual inspection of preengineered fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-6. Exemption for routine visual inspections of self-owned fire protection devices; exemption from fees.

(a) The provisions of this chapter do not apply to any firm that engages only in the routine visual inspection of fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers owned by the firm and installed on property under the control of said firm.

(b) The fees required by this chapter shall not apply to employees of federal, state, or local governments or to members of legally organized fire departments while acting in their official capacities.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-7. License required for work related to fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers; maximum fee.

Each firm in the business of installing, altering, inspecting, repairing, recharging, servicing, maintaining, or testing fire suppression systems or in the business of inspecting, repairing, recharging, servicing, maintaining, or testing portable fire extinguishers is required to obtain a license from the Commissioner. The annual fee for said license shall be as established by the Commissioner by rule or regulation, but such license fee shall not exceed \$50.00.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-8. Permit required for work related to fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers; maximum fee.

Each individual actually performing the installing, inspecting, repairing, recharging, servicing, or testing activities must possess a valid and subsisting permit issued by the Commissioner. The annual fee for said permit shall be as established by the Commissioner by rule or regulation, but such permit fee shall not exceed \$75.00. Such permit shall not be required for any individual employed by any firm or governmental entity that engages only in installing, inspecting, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing of portable fire extinguishers or fire suppression systems owned by the firm and installed on property under the control of said firm. Such individuals shall remain subject to the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter.

History. 1991, p. 933, § 1; Ga. L. 1997, p. 558, § 2;
Code 1981, § 25-12-8, enacted by Ga. L. Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-56/HB 1055.

25-12-9. Period of licenses and permits; failure to renew.

The licenses and permits required by this chapter shall be issued by the Commissioner for each license year beginning January 1 and expiring the following December 31. The failure to renew a license or permit by December 31 will cause the license or permit to become inoperative. A license or permit which is inoperative because of the failure to renew it shall be restored upon payment of the applicable fee plus a penalty equal to the applicable fee if said fees are paid within 90 days of expiration. After 90 days, the firm and the employees thereof must apply for new licenses and permits as required for an initial license or permit.

History.
Code 1981, § 25-12-9, enacted by Ga. L.
1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-10. Forms of licenses, permits, and applications.

The forms of such licenses and permits and applications and fees therefor shall be prescribed by the Commissioner by rule or regulation, subject to the limitations on fees provided for in Code Sections 25-12-7 and 25-12-8. In addition to such other information and data as the Commissioner determines are appropriate and required for such forms, there shall be included in such forms the following matters:

- (1) Each such application shall be sworn to by the applicant or, if a corporation, by an officer thereof;
- (2) Each application shall clearly state, in detail as set forth by the Commissioner, the type of activity or activities for which the applicant desires a license or permit to perform;

(3) An application for a permit shall include the name of the licensee employing such permittee, and the permit issued in pursuance of such application shall also set forth the name of such licensee. For persons covered by Code Section 25-12-8, the application and permit shall bear the business name of the person's employer; and

(4) The license or permit issued by the Commissioner shall clearly state the activity or activities for which the firm or individual has been issued the license or permit to perform. The licensee or permittee shall not perform any activity not noted on the license or permit issued by the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-11. Requirements for issuance of license.

A license may not be issued by the Commissioner until:

(1) The applicant has submitted to the Commissioner evidence of registration as a Georgia corporation;

(2) The Commissioner or a person designated by him has by inspection determined that the applicant possesses the equipment required for the activities the applicant requests to be licensed to perform. If the applicant includes in the request the high-pressure hydrostatic testing of equipment, the applicant must submit a copy of its United States Department of Transportation approval and renewals. If the applicant includes in the request the transfer of Halogenated fire suppression agents, the applicant must submit a copy of the current Underwriter's Laboratories on-site inspection form for a manufacturer's represented Halon pumping station. The Commissioner shall give an applicant 60 days to correct any deficiencies discovered by inspection;

(3) The applicant has submitted to the Commissioner proof of a valid comprehensive liability insurance policy purchased from an insurer authorized to do business in Georgia. The coverage must include bodily injury and property damage, products liability, completed operations, and contractual liability. The proof of insurance must also be provided before any license can be renewed. The minimum amount of said coverage shall be \$1 million or such other amount as specified by the Commissioner. An insurer which provides such coverage shall notify the Commissioner of any change in coverage; and

(4) The applicant, when filing an application for an examination, pays a nonrefundable filing fee fixed by rule or regulation of the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-11, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-12. Nonrefundable filing fee required for first permit.

No permit may be issued to a person for the first time by the Commissioner until the applicant has submitted a nonrefundable filing fee fixed by rule or regulation of the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-12, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

1991, the subsection (a) designation was
deleted since there was no subsection (b).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-12-13. Amended licenses or permits.

(a) Any firm or individual holding a valid license or permit desiring to perform an activity not covered by the current permit may submit an application for an amended license or permit at any time between January 1 and the date established by the Commissioner for filing applications for renewing an annual license or permit.

(b) The provisions of this chapter relating to the requirements for obtaining a license or permit shall apply to applications for an amended license or permit. The Commissioner shall by rule or regulation establish the fee for obtaining an amended license and the fee for an amended permit, but such fees shall not exceed the respective limits set forth in Code Sections 25-12-7 and 25-12-8.

(c) The fees for an amended license or permit shall not apply if the new activity or activities are included in an application for a renewal of the annual license or permit. The application for renewal must be accompanied by the proof of training and other applicable documentation regarding the activity or activities desired to be included on the new annual license or permit.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-13, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-14. Production of license or permit on demand.

Every permittee must have a valid and subsisting permit upon his person at all times while engaging in the installing, inspection, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing of fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers. Every licensee or permittee must be able to produce a valid license or valid permit, as appropriate, upon demand by the Commissioner or his representatives or by any local authority

having jurisdiction for fire protection or prevention or by any person for whom the licensee or permittee solicits to perform any of the activities covered by this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-14, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-15. Rules and regulations for standards.

The Commissioner may adopt rules and regulations setting forth the proper installation, inspection, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing of fire suppression systems or portable fire extinguishers. The Commissioner may adopt by rule the applicable standards of the National Fire Protection Association or another nationally recognized organization, if the standards are judged by him to be suitable for the enforcement of this chapter. All fire suppression systems covered by Code Section 25-12-3 and all portable fire extinguishers covered by Code Section 25-12-4 shall be installed, inspected, recharged, repaired, serviced, or tested in compliance with this chapter and with the Commissioner's rules and regulations.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-15, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Installation; Inspection; Recharging, Repairing, Servicing, and Testing of Portable Fire Extinguishers or Fire Suppressions Systems,

Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-23-.01 et seq.

25-12-16. Specifications for service tags.

The Commissioner shall make and promulgate specifications as to the number, type, size, shape, color, and information and data contained thereon of service tags to be attached to all portable fire extinguishers and fire suppression systems covered by this chapter when they are installed, inspected, recharged, repaired, serviced, or tested. It shall be unlawful to install, inspect, recharge, repair, service, or test any portable fire extinguisher or fire suppression system without attaching the required tag or tags completed in detail, including the actual month, day, and year the work was performed, or to use a tag not meeting the specifications set forth by the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-16, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-17. Violation of chapter by licensee or permittee.

(a) The violation of any provision of this chapter or any rule or

regulation adopted and promulgated pursuant to this chapter or the failure or refusal to comply with any notice or order to correct a violation or any cease and desist order by any person who possesses a license or permit issued pursuant to this chapter or who is required to have a license or permit issued pursuant to this chapter is cause for denial, nonrenewal, revocation, or suspension of such license or permit by the Commissioner after a determination that such person is guilty of such violations. An order of suspension shall state the period of time of such suspension, which period may not be in excess of two years from the date of such order. An order of revocation shall state the period of time of such revocation, which period may not be in excess of five years from the date of such order. Such order shall effect suspension or revocation of all licenses and permits then held by the person, and during such period of time no license or permit shall be issued to such person. During the suspension or revocation of any license or permit, the licensee or permittee whose license or permit has been suspended or revoked shall not engage in or attempt or profess to engage in any transaction or business for which a license or permit is required under this chapter or directly or indirectly own, control, or be employed in any manner by any firm, business, or corporation for which a license or permit under this chapter is required. If, during the period between the beginning of proceedings and the entry of an order of suspension or revocation by the Commissioner, a new license or permit has been issued to the person so charged, the order of suspension or revocation shall operate to suspend or revoke, as the case may be, such new license or permit held by such person.

(b) The department shall not, so long as the revocation or suspension remains in effect, issue any new license or permit for the establishment of any new firm, business, or corporation of any person or applicant that has or will have the same or similar management, ownership, control, employees, permittees, or licensees or will use the same or a similar name as the revoked or suspended firm, business, corporation, person, or applicant.

(c) The Commissioner may deny, nonrenew, suspend, or revoke the license or permit of:

(1) Any person, firm, business, or corporation whose license has been suspended or revoked under this chapter;

(2) Any firm, business, or corporation if any officer, director, stockholder, owner, or person who has a direct or indirect interest in the firm, business, or corporation has had his or her license or permit suspended under this chapter; and

(3) Any person who is or has been an officer, director, stockholder, or owner of a firm, business, or corporation or who has or had a direct

or indirect interest in a firm, business, or corporation whose license or permit has been suspended or revoked under this chapter.

(d) In addition to the grounds set forth in this Code section, it is cause for denial, nonrenewal, revocation, or suspension of a license or permit by the Commissioner if he or she determines that the licensee or permittee has:

(1) Rendered inoperative a portable fire extinguisher or preengineered or engineered fire suppression system covered by this chapter, except during such time as the extinguisher or preengineered or engineered system is being inspected, recharged, hydrotested, repaired, altered, added to, maintained, serviced, or tested or except pursuant to court order;

(2) Falsified any record required to be maintained by this chapter or rules or regulations adopted pursuant to this chapter or current fire codes enforced by the Commissioner;

(3) Improperly installed, recharged, hydrotested, repaired, serviced, modified, altered, inspected, or tested a portable fire extinguisher or preengineered or engineered fire suppression system;

(4) While holding a permit or license, allowed another person to use the permit or license or permit number or license number or used a license or permit or license number or permit number other than his or her own valid license or permit or license number or permit number;

(5) Failed to provide proof of or failed to maintain the minimum comprehensive liability insurance coverage as set forth in paragraph (3) of Code Section 25-12-11;

(6) Failed to obtain, retain, or maintain one or more of the qualifications for a license or permit required by this chapter;

(7) Used credentials, methods, means, or practices to impersonate a representative of the Commissioner or the state fire marshal or any local fire chief, fire marshal, or other fire authority having jurisdiction;

(8) Installed, recharged, hydrotested, repaired, serviced, modified, altered, inspected, maintained, added to, or tested a portable fire extinguisher or preengineered or engineered fire suppression system without a current, valid license or permit when such license or permit is required by this chapter;

(9) Made a material misstatement or misrepresentation or committed a fraud in obtaining or attempting to obtain a license or permit; or

(10) Failed to notify the Commissioner, in writing, within 30 days after a change of residence, principal business address, or name.

(e) In addition, the Commissioner shall not issue a new license or permit if the Commissioner finds that the circumstance or circumstances for which the license or permit was previously suspended or revoked still exist or are likely to recur.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-17, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 592, § 1.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2002, a comma was inserted following “revocation” in the first sentence in sub-

section (a); a comma was deleted following “licensees” in subsection (b); in paragraph (d)(9), a comma was deleted following “misstatement” and “misrepresentation” and “or” was inserted following “misstatement”; and “recur” was substituted for “reoccur” in subsection (e).

25-12-18. Cease and desist orders; period of revocation; civil penalty; opportunity for hearing; civil actions.

(a) Whenever the Commissioner shall have reason to believe that any individual is or has been violating any provisions of this chapter, the Commissioner, his or her deputy, his or her assistant, or other designated persons may issue and deliver to the individual an order to cease and desist such violation. An order issued under this Code section may be delivered in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this Code section.

(b) Violation of any provision of this chapter or failure to comply with a cease and desist order is cause for revocation of any or all permits and licenses issued by the Commissioner for a period of not less than six months and not to exceed five years. If a new permit or license has been issued to the person so charged, the order of revocation shall operate effectively with respect to such new permits and licenses held by such person. In the case of an applicant for a license, certificate, or permit, violation of any provision of this title may constitute grounds for refusal of the application. Decisions under this subsection may be appealed as provided by law.

(c) Any person who violates any provision of this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Commissioner of not more than \$1,000.00 for a first offense, not less than \$1,000.00 and not more than \$2,000.00 for a second offense, and not less than \$2,000.00 or more than \$5,000.00 for a third or subsequent offense. Prior to subjecting any person or entity to a fine under this subsection, the Commissioner or his or her agent shall give written notice to the person or entity by hand delivery or by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested, of the existence of the

violations. After a reasonable period of time after notice is given, an order may be issued based on this Code section. Such order must be delivered in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this Code section and must notify the person or entity of the right to a hearing with respect to same.

(d) Any order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter shall contain or be accompanied by a notice of opportunity for hearing which may provide that a hearing will be held if and only if a person subject to the order requests a hearing within ten days of receipt of the order and notice. The order and notice shall be served by delivery by the Commissioner or his or her agent or by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested. Any person who fails to comply with any order under this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be punished as provided by law.

(e) In addition to other powers granted to the Commissioner under this chapter, the Commissioner may bring a civil action to enjoin a violation of any provision of this chapter or of any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-18, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 933, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 592, § 2; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 25; Ga. L. 2014, p. 385, § 3/SB 325.

25-12-19. Penalty for violation of chapter.

(a) Any person, firm, or corporation which violates any provision of this chapter or any order, rule, or regulation of the Commissioner shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) It shall also constitute a misdemeanor willfully or intentionally to:

(1) Obliterate the serial number on a fire suppression system or portable fire extinguisher for the purposes of falsifying service records;

(2) Improperly install a fire suppression system or improperly recharge, repair, service, or test any such suppression system or any such portable fire extinguisher;

(3) While holding a permit or license, allow another person to use the permit or license or permit number or license number or to use a license or permit or license number or permit number other than his own valid license or permit or license number or permit number;

(4) Use or permit the use of any license by an individual or organization other than the one to whom the license is issued;

(5) To use any credential, method, means, or practice to imper-

sonate a representative of the Commissioner or the state fire marshal or any local fire chief, fire marshal, or other fire authority having jurisdiction; or

(6) To engage in the business of installing, inspecting, recharging, repairing, servicing, or testing portable fire extinguishers or fire suppression systems except in conformity with the provisions of this chapter and the applicable rules and regulations of the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-19, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-20. Delegation of authority by the Commissioner.

Any authority, power, or duty vested in the Commissioner by any provision of this chapter may be exercised, discharged, or performed by a deputy, assistant, or other designated employee acting in the Commissioner's name and by his delegated authority. The Commissioner shall be responsible for the official acts of such persons who act in his name and by his authority.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-20, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-21. Fees collected; grants and gifts.

(a) All fees collected by the Commissioner for licenses, permits, and related examinations pursuant to the provisions of this chapter shall be deposited in the general fund of this state in accordance with applicable laws of this state.

(b) The Commissioner is authorized to receive grants or gifts for the administration of this chapter from parties interested in upgrading and improving the quality of fire protection provided by portable fire extinguishers or fire suppression systems.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-21, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

25-12-22. Power of municipality, county, or state to regulate not limited.

(a) Nothing in this chapter limits the power of a municipality, a county, or the state to require the submission and approval of plans and specifications or to regulate the quality and character of work performed by contractors through a system of permits, fees, and inspec-

tions otherwise authorized by law for the protection of the public health and safety.

(b) No municipality or county shall impose any other requirements on persons licensed or permitted by the Commissioner as set forth in this chapter to prove competency to conduct any activity covered by said license or permit.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-12-22, enacted by Ga.
L. 1991, p. 933, § 1.

CHAPTER 13

MUNICIPAL, COUNTY, AND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS NOMENCLATURE

Sec.		Sec.	
25-13-1.	Short title.		connection with solicitation,
25-13-2.	Declaration of public policy.		advertisement, publication,
25-13-3.	Definitions.		or production.
25-13-4.	Prohibition against use of nomenclature pertaining to particular fire department in connection with solicita- tion, advertisement, publi- cation, or production.	25-13-6.	Procedure for obtaining per- mission to use nomencla- ture or symbols; discretion of local governing body.
		25-13-7.	Injunctions against viola- tions.
25-13-5.	Prohibition against use of symbols pertaining to par- ticular fire department in	25-13-8.	Civil penalties.
		25-13-9.	Actions for civil damages.
		25-13-10.	Criminal penalties.

25-13-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Municipal, County, and Volunteer Fire Departments Nomenclature Act of 1996.”

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-1, enacted by Ga. L.
1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-2. Declaration of public policy.

It is declared to be contrary to the health, safety, and public welfare of the people of this state for any individual or organization to act in a manner which would mislead the public into believing that a member of the public is dealing with any municipal, county, or volunteer fire department or with a member thereof when in fact the individual or organization is not the municipal, county, or volunteer fire department or a member thereof. Furthermore, the municipal, county, or volunteer fire department, which provides quality fire protection and safety services to the citizens of this state, has established a name for excellence in its field. This name should be protected for the department, its members, and the citizens of this state. Therefore, no person or organization should be allowed to use any municipal, county, or volunteer fire department’s name or any term used to identify the department or its members without the expressed permission of the local governing body. The provisions of this chapter are in furtherance of the promotion of this policy.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-2, enacted by Ga. L.
1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-3. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Badge” means any official badge used in the past or present by members of municipal, county, or volunteer fire departments.

(2) “Department” means any municipal, county, or volunteer fire department.

(3) “Director of public safety” means the director of public safety for any municipal, county, or volunteer fire department.

(4) “Emblem” means any official patch or other emblem worn currently or formerly or used by the department to identify the department or its employees.

(5) “Fire chief” means the fire chief for any municipal, county, or volunteer fire department.

(6) “Fire department” means any fire department which is authorized to exercise the general and emergency powers enumerated in Code Sections 25-3-1 and 25-3-2. Such term also means any department, agency, organization, or company operating in this state with the intent and purpose of carrying out the duties, functions, powers, and responsibilities normally associated with a fire department. These duties, functions, powers, and responsibilities include but are not limited to the protection of life and property against fire, explosions, or other hazards.

(7) “Local governing body” means, for a county, a county governing authority as defined in Code Section 1-3-3; for a municipal corporation, the governing authority of a municipal corporation as set forth in the municipal corporation’s charter; or, for a volunteer fire department, the board of directors or other governing body of such department by whatever name called.

(8) “Person” means any person, corporation, organization, or political subdivision of this state.

(9) “Volunteer fire department” means a fire department which has been issued a certificate of compliance pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 3 of this title and which consists of uncompensated or part-time firefighters.

(10) “Willful violator” means any person who knowingly violates the provisions of this chapter. Any person who violates this chapter after being advised in writing by the fire chief, the director of public safety, or the local governing authority that such person’s activity is in violation of this chapter shall be considered a willful violator and shall be considered in willful violation of this chapter. Any person

whose agent or representative is a willful violator and who has knowledge of the violation by the agent or representative shall also be considered a willful violator and shall be considered in willful violation of this chapter, unless, upon learning of the violation, he or she immediately terminates the agency or other relationship with such violator.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-4. Prohibition against use of nomenclature pertaining to particular fire department in connection with solicitation, advertisement, publication, or production.

Any person who uses words pertaining to a particular municipal, county, or volunteer fire department in connection with the planning, conduct, or execution of any solicitation; advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication; or play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, telemarketing, or other production in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such solicitation; advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication; or play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, telemarketing, or other production is approved, endorsed, or authorized by or associated with the department without written permission from the local governing authority shall be in violation of this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-4, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-5. Prohibition against use of symbols pertaining to particular fire department in connection with solicitation, advertisement, publication, or production.

Any person who uses or displays any current or historical symbol, including any emblem, seal, or badge, used by the department in connection with the planning, conduct, or execution of any solicitation; advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication; or play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, telemarketing, or other production in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such solicitation; advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication; or play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, telemarketing, or other production is approved, endorsed, or authorized by or associated with the department without written permission from the local governing authority shall be in violation of this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-5, enacted by Ga. L.
1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-6. Procedure for obtaining permission to use nomenclature or symbols; discretion of local governing body.

Any person wishing permission to use the nomenclature or a symbol of a department may submit a written request for such permission to the fire chief or director of public safety. Within 15 calendar days after receipt of the request, the fire chief or director of public safety shall send a notice with his or her recommendation to the local governing body stating whether the person may use the requested nomenclature or symbol. Within 30 calendar days after receipt of a recommendation from the fire chief or director of public safety, the local governing body shall send a notice to the requesting party of their decision on whether or not the person may use the requested nomenclature or symbol. If the local governing body does not respond within the 30 day time period, then the request is presumed to have been denied. The grant of permission under Code Section 35-10-4 or 35-10-5 shall be in the discretion of the local governing body under such conditions as the local governing body may impose.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-6, enacted by Ga. L.
1996, p. 772, § 1.

1996, “of” was substituted for “or” near the middle of the third sentence.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-13-7. Injunctions against violations.

Whenever there shall be an actual or threatened violation of Code Section 25-13-4 or 25-13-5, the local governing body shall have the right to apply to the superior court of the county of residence of the violator for an injunction to restrain the violation.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-7, enacted by Ga. L.
1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-8. Civil penalties.

In addition to any other relief or sanction for a violation of Code Section 25-13-4 or 25-13-5 and where the violation is willful, the local governing body shall be entitled to collect a civil penalty in the amount of \$500.00 for each violation. Further, when there is a finding of willful violation, the local governing body shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorney’s fees for bringing any action against the violator. The local governing body shall be entitled to seek civil sanctions in the superior court in the county of residence of the violator.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-8, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-9. Actions for civil damages.

Any person who has given money or any other item of value to another person due in part to such person's use of the nomenclature or symbol of a department in violation of this chapter may maintain a suit for damages against the violator. Where it is proven that the violation was willful, the victim shall be entitled to recover treble damages, punitive damages, and reasonable attorney's fees.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 772, § 1.

25-13-10. Criminal penalties.

Any person who violates the provisions of this chapter shall be guilty of a felony and upon conviction thereof shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$1,000.00 or more than \$5,000.00 or to imprisonment for not less than one or more than five years, or both. Each violation shall constitute a separate offense.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-13-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1996, p. 772, § 1.

CHAPTER 14

GEORGIA FIRE SAFETY STANDARD AND
FIREFIGHTER PROTECTION

Sec.		Sec.	
25-14-1.	Short title.	25-14-8.	Enforcement of this chapter; cooperation during inspections.
25-14-2.	Definitions.		
25-14-3.	Standards for testing cigarettes; reports; exceptions.	25-14-9.	Manufacturing for sale or selling cigarettes outside of Georgia not prohibited.
25-14-4.	Written certification.		
25-14-5.	Required marking of cigarettes.	25-14-10.	Effect of modification of federal standards.
25-14-6.	Civil penalty; forfeiture.		
25-14-7.	Rules and regulations; inspections.	25-14-11.	Impact of changes in New York safety standards.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 2/SB 418, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall preempt and supersede and shall prohibit the enactment of any local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations by the governing authority of

any county or municipal corporation concerning the testing of cigarettes, the performance standards of cigarettes, or the certification that cigarettes have been manufactured in compliance with testing and performance standards.”

25-14-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-1, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418.

25-14-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

- (1) “Agent” means any person authorized by the state revenue commissioner to purchase and affix stamps on packages of cigarettes.
- (2) “Cigarette” means:
 - (A) Any roll for smoking made wholly or in part of tobacco when the cover of the roll is paper or any substance other than tobacco; or
 - (B) Any roll for smoking wrapped in any substance containing tobacco which, because of its appearance, the type of tobacco used in the filler, or its packaging and labeling, is likely to be offered to, or purchased by, consumers as a cigarette as described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph.

(3) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(4) “Manufacturer” means:

(A) Any entity which manufactures, makes, produces, or causes to be produced cigarettes sold in this state or cigarettes said entity intends to be sold in this state;

(B) The first purchaser of cigarettes manufactured anywhere that intends to resell such cigarettes in this state regardless of whether the original manufacturer, maker, or producer intends such cigarettes to be sold in the United States; or

(C) Any entity which becomes a successor of an entity described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph.

(4.1) “New York Fire Safety Standards for Cigarettes” means those New York Fire Safety Standards for Cigarettes in effect on April 1, 2008.

(5) “Quality control and quality assurance program” means the laboratory procedures implemented to ensure that operator bias, systematic and nonsystematic methodological errors, and equipment related problems do not affect the results of the testing. Such a program ensures that the testing repeatability remains within the required repeatability values stated in paragraph (6) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-14-3 for all test trials used to certify cigarettes in accordance with this chapter.

(6) “Repeatability” means the range of values within which the repeat results of cigarette test trials from a single laboratory will fall 95 percent of the time.

(7) “Retail dealer” means any person, other than a manufacturer or wholesale dealer, engaged in selling cigarettes or tobacco products.

(8) “Sale” means any sale, transfer, exchange, theft, barter, gift, or offer for sale and distribution in any manner or by any means whatever.

(9) “Sell” means to sell or to offer or agree to do the same.

(10) “Wholesale dealer” means any person that is not a manufacturer who sells cigarettes or tobacco products to retail dealers or other persons for purposes of resale. A wholesale dealer is also any person who owns, operates, or maintains one or more cigarette or tobacco product vending machines in, at, or upon premises owned or occupied by any other person.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-2, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2008, in paragraph (1), “state revenue

commissioner” was substituted for “com- graph (4)(A), “or” was deleted from the
missioner of revenue”, and in subpara- end.

25-14-3. Standards for testing cigarettes; reports; exceptions.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (h) of this Code section, no cigarettes may be sold or offered for sale in this state or offered for sale or sold to persons located in this state unless the cigarettes have been tested in accordance with the test method and meet the performance standard specified in this Code section, a written certification has been filed by the manufacturer in accordance with Code Section 25-14-4, and the cigarettes have been marked in accordance with Code Section 25-14-5.

(b)(1) Testing of cigarettes shall be conducted in accordance with the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E2187-04, “Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of Cigarettes.”

(2) Testing shall be conducted on ten layers of filter paper.

(3) No more than 25 percent of the cigarettes tested in a test trial in accordance with this Code section shall exhibit full-length burns. Forty replicate tests shall comprise a complete test trial for each cigarette tested.

(4) The performance standard required by this Code section shall only be applied to a complete test trial.

(5) Written certifications shall be based upon testing conducted by a laboratory that has been accredited pursuant to standard ISO/IEC 17025 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or other comparable accreditation standard required by the Commissioner.

(6) Laboratories conducting testing in accordance with this Code section shall implement a quality control and quality assurance program that includes a procedure that will determine the repeatability of the testing results. The repeatability value shall be no greater than 0.19.

(7) This Code section does not require additional testing if cigarettes are tested consistent with this chapter for any other purpose.

(8) Testing performed or sponsored by the Commissioner to determine a cigarette’s compliance with the performance standard required shall be conducted in accordance with this Code section.

(c) Each cigarette listed in a certification submitted pursuant to Code Section 25-14-4 that uses lowered permeability bands in the cigarette paper to achieve compliance with the performance standard set forth in

this Code section shall have at least two nominally identical bands on the paper surrounding the tobacco column. At least one complete band shall be located at least 15 millimeters from the lighting end of the cigarette. For cigarettes on which the bands are positioned by design, there shall be at least two bands fully located at least 15 millimeters from the lighting end and ten millimeters from the filter end of the tobacco column, or ten millimeters from the labeled end of the tobacco column for nonfiltered cigarettes.

(d) A manufacturer of a cigarette that the Commissioner determines cannot be tested in accordance with the test method prescribed in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code section shall propose a test method and performance standard for the cigarette to the Commissioner. Upon approval of the proposed test method and a determination by the Commissioner that the performance standard proposed by the manufacturer is equivalent to the performance standard prescribed in paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of this Code section, the manufacturer may employ such test method and performance standard to certify such cigarette pursuant to Code Section 25-14-4. If the Commissioner determines that another state has enacted reduced cigarette ignition propensity standards that include a test method and performance standard that are the same as those contained in this chapter, and the Commissioner finds that the officials responsible for implementing those requirements have approved the proposed alternative test method and performance standard for a particular cigarette proposed by a manufacturer as meeting the fire safety standards of that state's law or regulation under a legal provision comparable to this Code section, then the Commissioner shall authorize that manufacturer to employ the alternative test method and performance standard to certify that cigarette for sale in this state, unless the Commissioner demonstrates a reasonable basis why the alternative test should not be accepted under this chapter. All other applicable requirements of this Code section shall apply to the manufacturer.

(e) Each manufacturer shall maintain copies of the reports of all tests conducted on all cigarettes offered for sale for a period of three years, and shall make copies of these reports available to the Commissioner and the Attorney General upon written request. Any manufacturer who fails to make copies of these reports available within 60 days of receiving a written request shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$10,000.00 for each day after the sixtieth day that the manufacturer does not make such copies available.

(f) The Commissioner may adopt a subsequent ASTM Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of Cigarettes upon a finding that such subsequent method does not result in a change in the percentage of full-length burns exhibited by any tested cigarette when

compared to the percentage of full-length burns the same cigarette would exhibit when tested in accordance with ASTM Standard E2187-04 and the performance standard in paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of this Code section.

(g) The Commissioner shall review the effectiveness of this Code section and report his or her findings every three years to the General Assembly and, if appropriate, recommendations for legislation to improve the effectiveness of this chapter. The report and legislative recommendations shall be submitted no later than June 30 following the conclusion of each three-year period.

(h) The requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section shall not prohibit:

(1) Wholesale or retail dealers from selling their existing inventory of cigarettes on or after January 1, 2010, if the wholesale or retailer dealer can establish that state tax stamps were affixed to the cigarettes prior to January 1, 2010, and if the wholesale or retailer dealer can establish that the inventory was purchased prior to January 1, 2010, in comparable quantity to the inventory purchased during the same period of the prior year; or

(2) The sale of cigarettes solely for the purpose of consumer testing. For purposes of this paragraph, the term “consumer testing” shall mean an assessment of cigarettes that is conducted by a manufacturer, or under the control and direction of a manufacturer, for the purpose of evaluating consumer acceptance of such cigarettes, utilizing only the quantity of cigarettes that is reasonably necessary for such assessment.

(i) This chapter shall be implemented in accordance with the implementation and substance of the New York Fire Safety Standards for Cigarettes.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-3, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 25/SB 46.

2008, “paragraph” was substituted for “subsection” in the second sentence of paragraph (h)(2).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-14-4. Written certification.

(a) Each manufacturer shall submit to the Commissioner a written certification attesting that:

(1) Each cigarette listed in the certification has been tested in accordance with Code Section 25-14-3; and

(2) Each cigarette listed in the certification meets the perfor-

mance standard set forth in paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-14-3.

(b) Each cigarette listed in the certification shall be described with the following information:

- (1) Brand or trade name on the package;
- (2) Style, such as light or ultra light;
- (3) Length in millimeters;
- (4) Circumference in millimeters;
- (5) Flavor, such as menthol or chocolate, if applicable;
- (6) Filter or nonfilter;
- (7) Package description, such as soft pack or box;
- (8) Marking approved in accordance with Code Section 25-14-5;
- (9) The name, address, and telephone number of the laboratory, if different from the manufacturer that conducted the test; and
- (10) The date that the testing occurred.

(c) The certifications shall also be made available to the Attorney General for purposes consistent with this chapter and to the state revenue commissioner for the purposes of ensuring compliance with this Code section.

(d) Each cigarette certified under this Code section shall be recertified every three years.

(e) For each cigarette listed in a certification, a manufacturer shall pay to the Commissioner a fee of \$250.00.

(f) If a manufacturer has certified a cigarette pursuant to this Code section and thereafter makes any change to such cigarette that is likely to alter its compliance with the reduced cigarette ignition propensity standards required by this chapter, that cigarette shall not be sold or offered for sale in this state until the manufacturer retests the cigarette in accordance with the testing standards set forth in Code Section 25-14-3 and maintains records of that retesting as required by Code Section 25-14-3. Any altered cigarette which does not meet the performance standard set forth in Code Section 25-14-3 shall not be sold in this state.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-4, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 25/SB 46; Ga. L. 2010, p. 878, § 25/HB 1387.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2008, “state revenue commissioner” was substituted for “commissioner of revenue” in subsection (c).

25-14-5. Required marking of cigarettes.

(a) Cigarettes that are certified by a manufacturer in accordance with Code Section 25-14-4 shall be marked to indicate compliance with the requirements of Code Section 25-14-3. The marking shall be in eight-point type or larger and consist of:

(1) Modification of the Universal Product Code to include a visible mark printed at or around the area of the Universal Product Code. The mark may consist of alphanumeric or symbolic characters permanently stamped, engraved, embossed, or printed in conjunction with the Universal Product Code;

(2) Any visible combination of alphanumeric or symbolic characters permanently stamped, engraved, or embossed upon the cigarette packaging or cellophane wrap; or

(3) Printed, stamped, engraved, or embossed text on the cigarette packaging or cellophane wrap that indicates that the cigarettes meet Georgia standards.

(b) A manufacturer shall use only one marking and shall apply this marking uniformly for all packages, including but not limited to packs, cartons, and cases, and brands marketed by that manufacturer.

(c) The Commissioner shall be notified as to the marking that is selected.

(d) Prior to the certification of any cigarette, a manufacturer shall present its proposed marking to the Commissioner for approval. Upon receipt of the request, the Commissioner shall approve or disapprove the marking offered. The Commissioner shall approve:

(1) Any marking in use and approved for sale in New York pursuant to the New York Fire Safety Standards for Cigarettes; or

(2) The letters "FSC," which signifies Fire Standards Compliant, appearing in eight-point type or larger and permanently printed, stamped, engraved, or embossed on the package at or near the Universal Product Code.

Proposed markings shall be deemed approved if the Commissioner fails to act within ten business days of receiving a request for approval.

(e) No manufacturer shall modify its approved marking unless the modification has been approved by the Commissioner in accordance with this Code section.

(f) Manufacturers certifying cigarettes in accordance with Code Section 25-14-4 shall provide a copy of the certifications to all wholesale dealers and agents to which they sell cigarettes and shall also provide

sufficient copies of an illustration of the package marking utilized by the manufacturer pursuant to this Code section for each retail dealer to which the wholesale dealers or agents sell cigarettes. Wholesale dealers and agents shall provide a copy of these package markings received from manufacturers to all retail dealers to which they sell cigarettes. Wholesale dealers, agents, and retail dealers shall permit the Commissioner, the state revenue commissioner, the Attorney General, and their employees to inspect markings of cigarette packaging marked in accordance with this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-5, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 25/SB 46; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 25/HB 79.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2008, “state revenue commissioner” was substituted for “commissioner of revenue” in the last sentence of subsection (f).

25-14-6. Civil penalty; forfeiture.

(a) A manufacturer, wholesale dealer, agent, or any other person or entity who knowingly sells or offers to sell cigarettes, other than through retail sale, in violation of Code Section 25-14-3, for a first offense shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$100.00 dollars for each pack of such cigarettes sold or offered for sale, provided that in no case shall the penalty against any such person or entity exceed \$100,000.00 during any 30 day period.

(b) A retail dealer who knowingly sells or offers to sell cigarettes in violation of Code Section 25-14-3 shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$100.00 for each pack of such cigarettes, provided that in no case shall the penalty against any retail dealer exceed \$25,000.00 during any 30 day period.

(c) In addition to any penalty prescribed by law, any corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, limited partnership, or association engaged in the manufacture of cigarettes that knowingly makes a false certification pursuant to Code Section 25-14-4 shall be subject to a civil penalty of at least \$75,000.00 and not to exceed \$250,000.00 for each such false certification.

(d) Any person violating any other provision in this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty for a first offense not to exceed \$1,000.00, and for a subsequent offense subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000.00, for each such violation.

(e) Any cigarettes that have been sold or offered for sale that do not comply with the performance standard required by Code Section 25-14-3 shall be subject to forfeiture and, upon forfeiture, shall be destroyed; provided, however, that prior to the destruction of any cigarette pursuant to this Code section, the true holder of the trade-

mark rights in the cigarette brand shall be permitted to inspect the cigarette.

(f) In addition to any other remedy provided by law, the Commissioner or Attorney General may file an action in superior court for a violation of this chapter, including petitioning for injunctive relief or to recover any costs or damages suffered by the state because of a violation of this chapter, including enforcement costs relating to the specific violation and attorney's fees. Each violation of this chapter or of rules or regulations adopted under this chapter constitutes a separate civil violation for which the Commissioner or Attorney General may obtain relief.

(g) Whenever any law enforcement personnel or duly authorized representative of the Commissioner or Attorney General shall discover any cigarettes that have not been marked in the manner required under Code Section 25-14-5, such personnel are hereby authorized and empowered to seize and take possession of such cigarettes. Such cigarettes shall be turned over to the state revenue commissioner and shall be forfeited to the state. Cigarettes seized pursuant to this subsection shall be destroyed; provided, however, that prior to the destruction of any cigarette seized pursuant to this subsection, the true holder of the trademark rights in the cigarette brand shall be permitted to inspect the cigarette.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-6, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 25/SB 46.

25-14-7. Rules and regulations; inspections.

(a) The Commissioner may promulgate rules and regulations, pursuant to Chapter 13 of Title 50, necessary to effectuate the purposes of this chapter.

(b) The state revenue commissioner in the regular course of conducting inspections of wholesale dealers, agents, and retail dealers, as authorized under Chapter 11 of Title 48, may inspect such cigarettes to determine if the cigarettes are marked as required by Code Section 25-14-5. If the cigarettes are not marked as required, the state revenue commissioner shall notify the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-14-7, enacted by Ga. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 25/SB 46. 2008, "state revenue commissioner" was substituted for "commissioner of revenue" twice in subsection (b).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

25-14-8. Enforcement of this chapter; cooperation during inspections.

To enforce the provisions of this chapter, the Attorney General and the Commissioner, their duly authorized representatives, and other law enforcement personnel shall be authorized to examine the books, papers, invoices, and other records of any person in possession, control, or occupancy of any premises where cigarettes are placed, stored, sold, or offered for sale, as well as the stock of cigarettes on the premises. Every person in the possession, control, or occupancy of any premises where cigarettes are placed, sold, or offered for sale shall be directed and required to give the Attorney General and the Commissioner, their duly authorized representatives, and other law enforcement personnel the means, facilities, and opportunity for the examinations authorized by this Code section.

History. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8,
Code 1981, § 25-14-8, enacted by Ga. L. § 25/SB 46.

25-14-9. Manufacturing for sale or selling cigarettes outside of Georgia not prohibited.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any person or entity from manufacturing or selling cigarettes that do not meet the requirements of Code Section 25-14-3 if the cigarettes are not for sale in this state or are packaged for sale outside the United States, and that person or entity has taken reasonable steps to ensure that such cigarettes will not be sold or offered for sale to persons located in this state.

History.
Code 1981, § 25-14-9, enacted by Ga. L.
2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418.

25-14-10. Effect of modification of federal standards.

This chapter shall cease to be applicable if federal reduced cigarette ignition propensity standards that preempt this chapter are enacted.

History.
Code 1981, § 25-14-10, enacted by Ga.
L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418.

25-14-11. Impact of changes in New York safety standards.

If, after the date specified in paragraph (4.1) of Code Section 25-14-2, the New York safety standards are changed, then the Commissioner shall suggest proposed legislation to the chairpersons of the appropriate standing committees of the General Assembly as designated by the presiding officer of each house. Such proposed legislation shall contain

provisions necessary to bring paragraph (4.1) of Code Section 25-14-2 into accordance with the New York safety standards.

History. L. 2008, p. 104, § 1/SB 418; Ga. L. 2009, p. Code 1981, § 25-14-11, enacted by Ga. 8, § 25/SB 46.

Sec.

- to deny entry to rides; inspector's right of access.
- 25-15-68. State liability not created.
- 25-15-69. Regulation of amusement rides by counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions.

Article 4**Carnival Ride Safety**

- 25-15-80. Short title.
- 25-15-81. Definitions.
- 25-15-82. Authority to consult.
- 25-15-83. Safety standards and regulations; licensing of inspectors; ride permits; fees.
- 25-15-84. Licensing of private inspectors.
- 25-15-85. Permit required; application; engineering evaluation.
- 25-15-86. Inspections.
- 25-15-87. Waiver of inspection for rides inspected by other entity.
- 25-15-88. Issuance of permit.
- 25-15-89. Maintenance, inspection, and repair records.
- 25-15-90. Ride operators; minimum standards for operation of rides.

Sec.

- 25-15-91. Accident reports.
- 25-15-92. Liability insurance, bond, or other security required.
- 25-15-93. Variances from standards and regulations.
- 25-15-94. Exempted rides.
- 25-15-95. Existing rides.
- 25-15-96. Order for temporary cessation; injunction; penalties.
- 25-15-97. Right of owner or operator to deny entry to rides; right of inspector to access ride.
- 25-15-98. Posting of age, size, and weight requirements for rides.
- 25-15-99. Itinerant carnival rides to be continuously registered with in-state agent.
- 25-15-100. State liability not created.
- 25-15-101. Regulation of carnival rides by counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions.

Article 5**Requirements for Scaffolding and Staging Design**

- 25-15-110. Requirements for scaffolding and staging design; inspection by Safety Fire Commissioner.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

State owned and operated boilers and pressure vessels were not subject to the regulatory provisions of former

O.C.G.A. § 34-11-1 et seq. (redesignated as O.C.G.A. § 25-15-10 et seq.). 1985 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 85-57.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

42 Am. Jur. 2d, Inspection Laws, § 1 et seq.

Am. Jur. Trials.

Boiler Explosion Cases, 13 Am. Jur. Trials, § 343.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 1 et seq.

ARTICLE 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

25-15-1. Office of Safety Fire Commissioner to be successor to Department of Labor relating to transferred functions.

(a) The office of Safety Fire Commissioner shall succeed to all rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and administrative orders of the Department of Labor in effect on June 30, 2012, or scheduled to go into effect on or after July 1, 2012, and which relate to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8 and shall further succeed to any rights, privileges, entitlements, obligations, and duties of the Department of Labor in effect on June 30, 2012, which relate to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8. Such rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and administrative orders shall remain in effect until amended, repealed, superseded, or nullified by the office of Safety Fire Commissioner by proper authority or as otherwise provided by law.

(b) Any proceedings or other matters pending before the Department of Labor or Commissioner of Labor on June 30, 2012, which relate to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8 shall be transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner on July 1, 2012.

(c) The rights, privileges, entitlements, obligations, and duties of parties to contracts, leases, agreements, and other transactions as identified by the Office of Planning and Budget entered into before July 1, 2012, by the Department of Labor which relate to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8 shall continue to exist; and none of these rights, privileges, entitlements, obligations, and duties are impaired or diminished by reason of the transfer of the functions to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner. In all such instances, the office of Safety Fire Commissioner shall be substituted for the Department of Labor, and the office of Safety Fire Commissioner shall succeed to the rights and duties under such contracts, leases, agreements, and other transactions.

(d) All persons employed by the Department of Labor in capacities which relate to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8 on June 30, 2012, shall, on July 1, 2012, become employees of the office of Safety Fire Commissioner in similar capacities, as determined by the Commissioner of Insurance. Such employees

shall be subject to the employment practices and policies of the office of Safety Fire Commissioner on and after July 1, 2012, but the compensation and benefits of such transferred employees shall not be reduced as a result of such transfer. Employees who are subject to the rules of the State Personnel Board and who are transferred to the office shall retain all existing rights under such rules. Accrued annual and sick leave possessed by the transferred employees on June 30, 2012, shall be retained by such employees as employees of the office of Safety Fire Commissioner.

(e) On July 1, 2012, the office of Safety Fire Commissioner shall receive custody of the state owned real property in the custody of the Department of Labor on June 30, 2012, and which pertains to the functions transferred to the office of Safety Fire Commissioner pursuant to this chapter and Part 6 of Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 8.

(f) The Safety Fire Commissioner shall provide a report to the House Committee on Governmental Affairs and the Senate Government Oversight Committee prior to the first day of the 2013 regular session of the Georgia General Assembly outlining the effects and results of this Code section and providing information on any problems or concerns with respect to the implementation of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-15-1, enacted by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 1/SB 446; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 25/HB 79.

Editor's notes.

For application of this statute in 2020, see Executive Order 04.23.20.02.

ARTICLE 2

REGULATION OF BOILERS AND PRESSURE VESSELS

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446 redesignated Chapter 11 of Title 34 (Code Sections 34-11-1 through 34-11-17 and 34-11-19 through 34-11-21) as this article.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Boilers and

Pressure Vessels, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-26-.01 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

State owned and operated boilers and pressure vessels were not subject to the regulatory provisions of former

O.C.G.A. § 34-11-1 et seq. (redesignated as O.C.G.A. § 25-15-10 et seq.). 1985 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 85-57.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

42 Am. Jur. 2d, Inspection Laws, § 1 et seq.

Am. Jur. Trials.

Boiler Explosion Cases, 13 Am. Jur. Trials, § 343.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 1 et seq.

25-15-10. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act” and, except as otherwise provided in this article, shall apply to all boilers and pressure vessels.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-1, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-10,

as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-11. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Boiler” means a closed vessel in which water or other liquid is heated, steam or vapor is generated, or steam is superheated or in which any combination of these functions is accomplished, under pressure or vacuum, for use externally to itself, by the direct application of energy from the combustion of fuels or from electricity, solar, or nuclear energy. The term “boiler” shall include fired units for heating or vaporizing liquids other than water where these units are separate from processing systems and are complete within themselves. The term “boiler” is further defined as follows:

(A) “Heating boiler” means a steam or vapor boiler operating at pressures not exceeding 15 psig or a hot water boiler operating at pressures not exceeding 160 psig or temperatures not exceeding 250 degrees Fahrenheit.

(B) “High pressure, high temperature water boiler” means a water boiler operating at pressures exceeding 160 psig or temperatures exceeding 250 degrees Fahrenheit.

(C) “Power boiler” means a boiler in which steam or other vapor is generated at a pressure of more than 15 psig.

(2) “Certificate of inspection” means an inspection, the report of which is used by the chief inspector to determine whether or not a certificate as provided by subsection (c) of Code Section 25-15-24 may be issued.

(3) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(4) “Office” means the office of Safety Fire Commissioner.

(5) “Pressure vessel” means a vessel other than those vessels defined in paragraph (1) of this Code section in which the pressure is obtained from an external source or by the application of heat.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-2, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 11; Code 1981, § 25-15-11, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-12. Consulting on boilers and pressure vessels.

The Commissioner shall be authorized to consult with persons knowledgeable in the areas of construction, use, or safety of boilers and pressure vessels and to create committees composed of such consultants to assist the Commissioner in carrying out his or her duties under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 443, § 2; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 12; Code 1981, § 25-15-12, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-13. Definitions, rules, and regulations for safe construction, installation, inspection, maintenance, and repair.

(a)(1) The office shall formulate definitions, rules, and regulations for the safe construction, installation, inspection, maintenance, and repair of boilers and pressure vessels in this state.

(2) The definitions, rules, and regulations so formulated for new construction shall be based upon and at all times follow the generally accepted nation-wide engineering standards, formulas, and practices established and pertaining to boiler and pressure vessel construction and safety; and the office may adopt an existing published codification thereof, known as the Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, with the amendments and interpretations thereto made and approved by the council of the society, and may likewise adopt the amendments and interpretations subsequently made and published by the same authority. When so adopted, the same shall be deemed to be incorporated into and shall constitute a part of the whole of the definitions, rules, and regulations of the office. Amendments and interpretations to the code so adopted shall be effective immediately upon being promulgated, to the end that the definitions, rules, and regulations shall at all times follow the generally accepted nation-wide engineering standards.

(3) The office shall formulate the rules and regulations for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of boilers and pressure vessels which were in use in this state prior to the date upon which the first rules and regulations under this article pertaining to existing installations become effective or during the 12 month period immediately thereafter. The rules and regulations so formulated shall be based upon and at all times follow generally accepted nation-wide engineer-

ing standards and practices and may adopt sections of the Inspection Code of the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors or API 510 of the American Petroleum Institute, as applicable.

(b) The rules and regulations and any subsequent amendments thereto formulated by the office shall, immediately following a hearing upon not less than 20 days' notice as provided in this article, be approved and published and when so promulgated shall have the force and effect of law, except that the rules applying to the construction of new boilers and pressure vessels shall not become mandatory until 12 months after their promulgation by the office. Notice of the hearing shall give the time and place of the hearing and shall state the matters to be considered at the hearing. Such notice shall be given to all persons directly affected by such hearing. In the event all persons directly affected are unknown, notice may be perfected by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in this state at least 20 days prior to such hearing.

(c) Subsequent amendments to the rules and regulations adopted by the office shall be permissive immediately and shall become mandatory 12 months after their promulgation.

History. § 2; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 13; Code 1981, Code 1981, § 34-11-4, enacted by Ga. L. § 25-15-13, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213, 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-14. Effect on new construction and installation.

No boiler or pressure vessel which does not conform to the rules and regulations of the office governing new construction and installation shall be installed and operated in this state after 12 months from the date upon which the first rules and regulations under this article pertaining to new construction and installation shall have become effective, unless the boiler or pressure vessel is of special design or construction and is not inconsistent with the spirit and safety objectives of such rules and regulations, in which case a special installation and operating permit may at its discretion be granted by the office.

History. § 3; Code 1981, § 25-15-14, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446. Code 1981, § 34-11-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213,

25-15-15. Maximum allowable working pressure.

(a) The maximum allowable working pressure of a boiler carrying the ASME Code symbol or of a pressure vessel carrying the ASME or API-ASME symbol shall be determined by the applicable sections of the code under which it was constructed and stamped. Subject to the concurrence of the enforcement authority at the point of installation,

such a boiler or pressure vessel may be rerated in accordance with the rules of a later edition of the ASME Code and in accordance with the rules of the National Board Inspection Code or API 510, as applicable.

(b) The maximum allowable working pressure of a boiler or pressure vessel which does not carry the ASME or the API-ASME Code symbol shall be computed in accordance with the Inspection Code of the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors.

(c) This article shall not be construed as in any way preventing the use, sale, or reinstallation of a boiler or pressure vessel referred to in this Code section, provided it has been made to conform to the rules and regulations of the office governing existing installations and provided, further, that it has not been found upon inspection to be in an unsafe condition.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873,

§ 14; Code 1981, § 25-15-15, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-16. Exceptions from article and exemptions from inspection and certificate requirements.

(a) This article shall not apply to the following boilers and pressure vessels:

(1) Boilers and pressure vessels under federal control or under regulations of 49 C.F.R. 192 and 193;

(2) Pressure vessels used for transportation and storage of compressed or liquefied gases when constructed in compliance with specifications of the United States Department of Transportation and when charged with gas or liquid, marked, maintained, and periodically requalified for use, as required by appropriate regulations of the United States Department of Transportation;

(3) Pressure vessels located on vehicles operating under the rules of other state or federal authorities and used for carrying passengers or freight;

(4) Air tanks installed on the right of way of railroads and used directly in the operation of trains;

(5) Pressure vessels that do not exceed:

(A) Five cubic feet in volume and 250 psig pressure; or

(B) One and one-half cubic feet in volume and 600 psig pressure; or

(C) An inside diameter of six inches with no limitation on pressure;

(6) Pressure vessels having an internal or external working pressure not exceeding 15 psig with no limit on size;

(7) Pressure vessels with a nominal water-containing capacity of 120 gallons or less for containing water under pressure, including those containing air, the compression of which serves only as a cushion;

(8) Pressure vessels containing water heated by steam or any other indirect means when none of the following limitations are exceeded:

(A) A heat input of 200,000 BTU per hour;

(B) A water temperature of 210 degrees Fahrenheit; and

(C) A nominal water-containing capacity of 120 gallons;

(9) Hot water supply boilers which are directly fired with oil, gas, or electricity when none of the following limitations are exceeded:

(A) Heat input of 200,000 BTU per hour;

(B) Water temperature of 210 degrees Fahrenheit; and

(C) Nominal water-containing capacity of 120 gallons.

These exempt hot water supply boilers shall be equipped with ASME-National Board approved safety relief valves;

(10) Pressure vessels in the care, custody, and control of research facilities and used solely for research purposes which require one or more details of noncode construction or which involve destruction or reduced life expectancy of those vessels;

(11) Pressure vessels or other structures or components that are not considered to be within the scope of ASME Code, Section VIII;

(12) Boilers and pressure vessels operated and maintained for the production and generation of electricity; provided, however, that any person, firm, partnership, or corporation operating such a boiler or pressure vessel has insurance or is self-insured and such boiler or pressure vessel is regularly inspected in accordance with the minimum requirements for safety as defined in the ASME Code by an inspector who has been issued a certificate of competency by the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 25-15-19;

(13) Boilers and pressure vessels operated and maintained as a part of a manufacturing process; provided, however, that any person, firm, partnership, or corporation operating such a boiler or pressure vessel has insurance or is self-insured and such boiler or pressure vessel is regularly inspected in accordance with the minimum re-

quirements for safety as defined in the ASME Code by an inspector who has been issued a certificate of competency by the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 25-15-19;

(14) Boilers and pressure vessels operated and maintained by a public utility; and

(15) Autoclaves used only for the sterilization of reusable medical or dental implements in the place of business of any professional licensed by the laws of this state.

(b) The following boilers and pressure vessels shall be exempt from the requirements of subsections (b), (c), and (d) of Code Section 25-15-23 and Code Sections 25-15-24 and 25-15-26:

(1) Boilers or pressure vessels located on farms and used solely for agricultural or horticultural purposes;

(2) Heating boilers or pressure vessels which are located in private residences or in apartment houses of less than six family units;

(3) Any pressure vessel used as an external part of an electrical circuit breaker or transformer;

(4) Pressure vessels on remote oil or gas-producing lease locations that have fewer than ten buildings intended for human occupancy per 0.25 square mile and where the closest building is at least 220 yards from any vessel;

(5) Pressure vessels used for storage of liquid propane gas under the jurisdiction of the state fire marshal, except for pressure vessels used for storage of liquefied petroleum gas, 2,000 gallons or above, which have been modified or altered; and

(6) Air storage tanks not exceeding 16 cubic feet (120 gallons) in size and under 250 psig pressure.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213, § 4; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 34; Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 13, § 34; Ga. L. 1988, p. 314, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 14, § 34; Ga. L. 1989, p. 465, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 816, § 1; Ga. L. 1993, p. 434, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 914, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-16, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

1986, a hyphen was inserted in “water-containing” in subparagraph (a)(8)(C) and a hyphen was inserted in “gas-producing” in paragraph (b)(4).

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1988, “liquefied” was substituted for “liquified” in paragraph (a)(2).

Administrative rules and regulations.

Exceptions, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.22.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Combination potable water heater — space heating units were covered by the Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act, former O.C.G.A. § 34-11-1 et seq. (redesignated as O.C.G.A. § 25-15-10 et seq.)

except to the extent those units are clearly exempted under former O.C.G.A. § 34-11-7 (redesignated as O.C.G.A. § 25-15-16). 1989 Op. Att’y Gen. 89-24.

25-15-17. Chief inspector.

(a) The Commissioner may appoint to be chief inspector a citizen of this state or, if not available, a citizen of another state, who shall have had at the time of such appointment not less than five years’ experience in the construction, installation, inspection, operation, maintenance, or repair of high pressure boilers and pressure vessels as a mechanical engineer, steam operating engineer, boilermaker, or boiler inspector and who shall have passed the same kind of examination as that prescribed under Code Section 25-15-20. Such chief inspector may be removed for cause after due investigation by the Commissioner.

(b) The chief inspector, if authorized by the Commissioner, is charged, directed, and empowered:

(1) To take action necessary for the enforcement of the laws of this state governing the use of boilers and pressure vessels to which this article applies and of the rules and regulations of the office;

(2) To keep a complete record of the name of each owner or user and his or her location and, except for pressure vessels covered by an owner or user inspection service, the type, dimensions, maximum allowable working pressure, age, and the last recorded inspection of all boilers and pressure vessels to which this article applies;

(3) To publish in print or electronically and make available to anyone requesting them copies of the rules and regulations promulgated by the office;

(4) To issue or to suspend or revoke for cause inspection certificates as provided for in Code Section 25-15-24; and

(5) To cause the prosecution of all violators of the provisions of this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-8, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 34; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213, § 5; Ga. L. 1987,

p. 1349, § 3; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388; Code 1981, § 25-15-17, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-18. Deputy inspectors.

The Commissioner may employ deputy inspectors who shall be

responsible to the chief inspector and who shall have had at the time of appointment not less than three years' experience in the construction, installation, inspection, operation, maintenance, or repair of high pressure boilers and pressure vessels as a mechanical engineer, steam operating engineer, boilermaker, or boiler inspector and who shall have passed the examination provided for in Code Section 25-15-20.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213,

§ 6; Code 1981, § 25-15-18, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-19. Special inspectors; owner or user inspectors.

(a) In addition to the deputy inspectors authorized by Code Section 25-15-18 the Commissioner shall, upon the request of any company licensed to insure and insuring in this state boilers and pressure vessels or upon the request of any company operating pressure vessels in this state for which the owner or user maintains a regularly established inspection service which is under the supervision of one or more technically competent individuals whose qualifications are satisfactory to the office and causes such pressure vessels to be regularly inspected and rated by such inspection service in accordance with applicable provisions of the rules and regulations adopted by the office pursuant to Code Section 25-15-13, issue to any inspectors of such insurance company certificates of competency as special inspectors and to any inspectors of such company operating pressure vessels certificates of competency as owner or user inspectors, provided that each such inspector before receiving or her certificate of competency shall satisfactorily pass the examination provided for by Code Section 25-15-20 or, in lieu of such examination, shall hold a commission or a certificate of competency as an inspector of boilers or pressure vessels for a state that has a standard of examination substantially equal to that of this state or a commission as an inspector of boilers and pressure vessels issued by the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors. A certificate of competency as an owner or user inspector shall be issued to an inspector of a company operating pressure vessels in this state only if, in addition to meeting the requirements stated in this Code section, the inspector is employed full time by the company and is responsible for making inspections of pressure vessels used or to be used by such company and which are not for resale.

(b) Such special inspectors or owner or user inspectors shall receive no salary from nor shall any of their expenses be paid by the state, and the continuance of their certificates of competency shall be conditioned upon their continuing in the employ of the boiler insurance company duly authorized or in the employ of the company so operating pressure vessels in this state and upon their maintenance of the standards imposed by this article.

(c) Such special inspectors or owner or user inspectors may inspect all boilers and pressure vessels insured or all pressure vessels operated by their respective companies; and, when so inspected, the owners and users of such boilers and pressure vessels shall be exempt from the payment to the state of the inspection fees as prescribed in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, § 4; Ga. L. 1988, p. 13, § 34; Code 1981, § 25-15-19, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1988, “full time” was substituted for “full-time” in the last sentence of subsection (a).

25-15-20. Examination of inspectors.

The examination for chief, deputy, special, or owner or user inspectors shall be in writing and shall be held by the office or by an examining board appointed in accordance with the requirements of the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors, with at least two members present at all times during the examination. Such examination shall be confined to questions the answers to which will aid in determining the fitness and competency of the applicant for the intended service and may be those prepared by the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors. In case an applicant fails to pass the examination, he or she may appeal to the office for another examination which shall be given by the office or the appointed examining board after 90 days. The record of an applicant’s examination shall be accessible to the applicant and his or her employer.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-11, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-20, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

nation, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.05.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Certificate of Competency and Exami-

25-15-21. Suspension and revocation of inspector’s certificate of competency; hearing; reinstatement.

(a) An inspector’s certificate of competency may be suspended by the Commissioner after due investigation for the incompetence or untrustworthiness of the holder thereof or for willful falsification of any matter or statement contained in his or her application or in a report of any inspection made by him or her. Written notice of any such suspension shall be given by the Commissioner within not more than ten days thereof to the inspector and his or her employer. A person whose certificate of competency has been suspended shall be entitled to an

appeal as provided in Code Section 25-15-28 and to be present in person and to be represented by counsel at the hearing of the appeal.

(b) If the office has reason to believe that an inspector is no longer qualified to hold his or her certificate of competency, the office shall provide written notice to the inspector and his or her employer of the office's determination and the right to an appeal as provided in Code Section 25-15-28. If, as a result of such hearing, the inspector has been determined to be no longer qualified to hold his or her certificate of competency, the Commissioner shall thereupon revoke such certificate of competency forthwith.

(c) A person whose certificate of competency has been suspended shall be entitled to apply, after 90 days from the date of such suspension, for reinstatement of such certificate of competency.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-12, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873,

§ 15; Code 1981, § 25-15-21, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-22. Replacement of lost or destroyed certificates of competency.

If a certificate of competency is lost or destroyed, a new certificate of competency shall be issued in its place without another examination.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-13, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-22, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Certificate of Authority to Install, Main-

tain and/or Service Boilers, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.18.

25-15-23. Inspections.

(a) The Commissioner, the chief inspector, or any deputy inspector shall have free access, during reasonable hours, to any premises in this state where a boiler or pressure vessel is being constructed for use in, or is being installed in, this state for the purpose of ascertaining whether such boiler or pressure vessel is being constructed and installed in accordance with the provisions of this article.

(b)(1) On and after January 1, 1986, each boiler and pressure vessel used or proposed to be used within this state, except for pressure vessels covered by an owner or user inspection service as described in subsection (d) of this Code section or except for boilers or pressure vessels exempt under Code Section 25-15-16 (owners and users may request to waive this exemption), shall be thoroughly inspected as to their construction, installation, and condition as follows:

(A) Power boilers and high pressure, high temperature water boilers shall receive a certificate inspection annually which shall be an internal inspection where construction permits; otherwise, it shall be as complete an inspection as possible. Such boilers shall also be externally inspected while under pressure, if possible;

(B) Low pressure steam or vapor heating boilers shall receive a certificate inspection biennially with an internal inspection every four years where construction permits;

(C) Hot water heating and hot water supply boilers shall receive a certificate inspection biennially with an internal inspection at the discretion of the inspector;

(D) Pressure vessels subject to internal corrosion shall receive a certificate inspection triennially with an internal inspection at the discretion of the inspector. Pressure vessels not subject to internal corrosion shall receive a certificate of inspection at intervals set by the office; and

(E) Nuclear vessels within the scope of this article shall be inspected and reported in such form and with such appropriate information as the office shall designate.

(2) A grace period of two months beyond the periods specified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of this paragraph may elapse between certificate inspections.

(3) The office may provide for longer periods between certificate inspection in its rules and regulations.

(4) Under the provisions of this article, the office is responsible for providing for the safety of life, limb, and property and therefore has jurisdiction over the interpretation and application of the inspection requirements as provided for in the rules and regulations which it has promulgated. The person conducting the inspection during construction and installation shall certify as to the minimum requirements for safety as defined in the ASME Code. Inspection requirements of operating equipment shall be in accordance with generally accepted practice and compatible with the actual service conditions, such as:

(A) Previous experience, based on records of inspection, performance, and maintenance;

(B) Location, with respect to personnel hazard;

(C) Quality of inspection and operating personnel;

(D) Provision for related safe operation controls; and

(E) Interrelation with other operations outside the scope of this article.

Based upon documentation of such actual service conditions by the owner or user of the operating equipment, the office may, in its discretion, permit variations in the inspection requirements.

(c) The inspections required in this article shall be made by the chief inspector, by a deputy inspector, by a special inspector, or by an owner or user inspector provided for in this article.

(d) Owner or user inspection of pressure vessels is permitted, provided the owner or user inspection service is regularly established and is under the supervision of one or more individuals whose qualifications are satisfactory to the office and said owner or user causes the pressure vessels to be inspected in conformance with the National Board Inspection Code or API 510, as applicable.

(e) If, at the discretion of the inspector, a hydrostatic test shall be deemed necessary, it shall be made by the owner or user of the boiler or pressure vessel.

(f) All boilers, other than cast iron sectional boilers, and pressure vessels to be installed in this state after the 12 month period from the date upon which the rules and regulations of the office shall become effective shall be inspected during construction as required by the applicable rules and regulations of the office by an inspector authorized to inspect boilers and pressure vessels in this state or, if constructed outside of the state, by an inspector holding a commission issued by the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors.

History.

§ 7; Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, § 5; Code 1981, Code 1981, § 34-11-14, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 213, § 25-15-23, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-24. Filing and maintenance of special investigator's report; issuance and suspension of inspection certificate.

(a) Each company employing special inspectors shall, within 30 days following each certificate inspection made by such inspectors, file a report of such inspection with the chief inspector upon appropriate forms as promulgated by the Commissioner. The filing of reports of external inspections, other than certificate inspections, shall not be required except when such inspections disclose that the boiler or pressure vessel is in a dangerous condition.

(b) Each company operating pressure vessels covered by an owner or user inspection service meeting the requirements of subsection (a) of Code Section 25-15-19 shall maintain in its files an inspection record

which shall list, by number and such abbreviated description as may be necessary for identification, each pressure vessel covered by this article, the date of the last inspection of each pressure vessel, and the approximate date for the next inspection. The inspection record shall be available for examination by the chief inspector or the chief inspector's authorized representative during business hours.

(c) If the report filed pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shows that a boiler or pressure vessel is found to comply with the rules and regulations of the office, the chief inspector, or his or her duly authorized representative, shall issue to such owner or user an inspection certificate bearing the date of inspection and specifying the maximum pressure under which the boiler or pressure vessel may be operated. Such inspection certificate shall be valid for not more than 14 months from its date in the case of power boilers, 26 months in the case of heating and hot water supply boilers, and 38 months in the case of pressure vessels. In the case of those boilers and pressure vessels covered by subparagraphs (b)(1)(A) through (b)(1)(D) of Code Section 25-15-23 for which the office has established or extended the operating period between required inspections pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) of Code Section 25-15-23, the certificate shall be valid for a period of not more than two months beyond the period set by the office. Certificates for boilers shall be posted under glass, or similarly protected, in the room containing the boiler. Pressure vessel certificates shall be posted in like manner, if convenient, or filed where they will be readily accessible for examination.

(d) No inspection certificate issued for an insured boiler or pressure vessel based upon a report of a special inspector shall be valid after the boiler or pressure vessel for which it was issued shall cease to be insured by a company duly authorized by this state to provide such insurance.

(e) The Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may at any time suspend an inspection certificate after showing cause that the boiler or pressure vessel for which it was issued cannot be operated without menace to the public safety or when the boiler or pressure vessel is found not to comply with the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this article. Each suspension of an inspection certificate shall continue in effect until such boiler or pressure vessel shall have been made to conform to the rules and regulations of the office and until such inspection certificate shall have been reinstated.

(f) The Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may issue a written order for the temporary cessation of operation of a boiler or pressure vessel if it has been determined after inspection to be hazardous or unsafe. Operations shall not resume until such

conditions are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commissioner or his or her authorized representative.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-15, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, §§ 6-8; Ga. L. 1988, p. 13, § 34; Ga. L. 1991, p. 258, § 2; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 16; Code 1981, § 25-15-24, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1988, “certificate” was substituted for “certificates” near the beginning of subsection (d).

25-15-25. Reinspections and fees; waiver of penalties and interest.

(a) Boilers and pressure vessels, subject to operating certificate inspections by special, owner, or user inspectors, shall be inspected within 60 calendar days following the required reinspection date. Inspections not performed within this 60 calendar day period shall result in a civil penalty of \$500.00 for each boiler or pressure vessel not inspected.

(b)(1) Inspection fees due on boiler and pressure vessels subject to inspection by the chief or deputy inspectors or operating certificate fees due from inspections performed by special, or owner or user, inspectors shall be paid within 60 calendar days of completion of such inspections.

(2) Inspection fees or operating certificate fees unpaid within 60 calendar days shall bear interest at the rate of 1.5 percent per month or any fraction of a month. Interest shall continue to accrue until all amounts due, including interest, are received by the Commissioner.

(c) The Commissioner may waive the collection of the penalties and interest assessed as provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section when it is reasonably determined that the delays in inspection or payment were unavoidable or due to the action or inaction of the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-15.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 258, § 3; Code 1981, § 25-15-25, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspection

Requirements, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.08.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Penalty assessed against entity employing own inspectors. — Entity requesting authorization from the commis-

sioner to employ its own inspectors is responsible for ensuring that inspections pursuant to former O.C.G.A. § 34-11-

15.1(a) (redesignated as O.C.G.A. § 25-15-25(a)) are timely performed, and such entity should be assessed the civil penalty when inspections are not timely performed. 1991 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 91-17.

25-15-26. Requirement of valid inspection certificate for operation of a boiler or pressure vessel.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, partnership, or corporation to operate in this state a boiler or pressure vessel, except a pressure vessel covered by owner or user inspection service as provided for in Code Section 25-15-24, without a valid inspection certificate. The operation of a boiler or pressure vessel without such inspection certificate or at a pressure exceeding that specified in such inspection certificate or in violation of this article shall constitute a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-16, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 34; Code 1981, § 25-15-26, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.19.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Preparation for Certificate Inspection,

25-15-27. Payment of inspection fees.

The owner or user of a boiler or pressure vessel required by this article to be inspected by the chief inspector or a deputy inspector shall pay directly to the chief inspector, upon completion of inspection, fees as prescribed in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner; provided, however, that, with respect to pressure vessel certificates of inspection, such fees shall not exceed \$10.00 per annum. The chief inspector shall transfer all fees so received to the general fund of the state treasury. All funds so deposited in the state treasury are authorized to be appropriated by the General Assembly to the Safety Fire Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-17, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 258, § 4; Code 1981, § 25-15-

27, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-28. Appeals.

(a) Any person aggrieved by an order or an act of the Commissioner or the chief inspector under this article may, within 15 days of notice thereof, request a hearing before an administrative law judge of the Office of State Administrative Hearings, as provided by Code Section 50-13-41.

(b) Any person aggrieved by a decision of an administrative law

judge may file an appeal pursuant to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-19, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 17; Code 1981, § 25-15-28, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 25/HB 79.

25-15-29. Limitations on authority of local governments to regulate boilers and pressure vessels.

No county, municipality, or other political subdivision shall have the power to make any laws, ordinances, or resolutions providing for the construction, installation, inspection, maintenance, and repair of boilers and pressure vessels within the limits of such county, municipality, or other political subdivision; and any such laws, ordinances, or resolutions shall be void and of no effect.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1984, p. 1227, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-29, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-30. State liability not created.

Neither this article nor any provision of this article shall be construed to place any liability on the State of Georgia, the office, or the Commissioner with respect to any claim by any person, firm, or corporation relating in any way whatsoever to boilers and pressure vessels and any injury or damages arising therefrom.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-11-21, enacted by Ga. L. 1987, p. 1349, § 10; Code 1981, § 25-15-30, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 2/SB 446.

25-15-31. Civil penalties for violations; authority of Commissioner to bring civil action.

(a) Except as provided for in subsection (a) of Code Section 25-15-25, any person who violates any provision of this article or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this article shall, after notice and hearing, be subject to a civil penalty imposed by the Commissioner of not more than \$5,000.00. The imposition of a penalty for a violation of this article shall not be construed as excusing the violation or permitting it to continue. The Commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of this subsection.

(b) In addition to other powers granted to the Commissioner under this article, the Commissioner may bring a civil action to enjoin a violation of any provision of this chapter or of any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commissioner under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 25-15-31, enacted by Ga. L. 2018, p. 729, § 1/SB 353.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Notice of Hearing and Penalties, Offi-

cial Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Boilers and Pressure Valves, Rule 120-3-26-.20.

ARTICLE 3

AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446, redesignated Chapter 12 of Title 34 (Code Sections 34-12-1 through 34-12-3 and 34-12-5 through 34-12-21) as this article.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Amusement

Ride Safety, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-27-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

27A Am. Jur. 2d, Entertainment and Sports Law, § 4 et seq. 42 Am. Jur. 2d, Inspection Laws, § 1 et seq. 51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits, § 1 et seq.

Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.

Dangerous or Defective Amusement Ride, 25 POF2d 613.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 1 et seq.

ALR.

Products liability: mechanical amusement rides and devices, 77 A.L.R.4th 1152.

Liability for injury to customer or patron from amusement device maintained by store or shopping center for use by customers, 40 A.L.R.5th 807.

25-15-50. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Amusement Ride Safety Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-1, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-50,

as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

1C Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice

Forms, Amusements and Exhibitions, § 2.

25-15-51. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Amusement ride” means any mechanical device, other than those regulated by the Consumer Products Safety Commission, which carries or conveys passengers along, around, or over a fixed or restricted route or course or within a defined area for the purpose of

giving its passengers amusement, pleasure, thrills, or excitement. Such term shall not include any such device which is not permanently fixed to a site.

(2) “Authorized person” means a competent person experienced and instructed in the work to be performed who has been given the responsibility to perform his or her duty by the owner or his or her representative.

(3) “Certificate fee” means the fee charged by the office for a certificate to operate an amusement ride.

(4) “Certificate of inspection” means a certificate issued by a licensed inspector that an amusement ride meets all relevant provisions of this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

(5) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(6) “Licensed inspector” means a registered professional engineer or any other person who is found by the office to possess the requisite training and experience to perform competently the inspections required by this article and who is licensed by the office to perform inspections of amusement rides.

(7) “Operator” means a person or persons actually engaged in or directly controlling the operation of an amusement ride.

(8) “Office” means the office of Safety Fire Commissioner, which is designated to enforce the provisions of this article and to formulate and enforce standards and regulations.

(9) “Owner” means a person, including the state or any of its subdivisions, who owns an amusement ride or, in the event that the amusement ride is leased, the lessee.

(10) “Permit” means a permit to operate an amusement ride issued to an owner by the office.

(11) “Permit fee” means the fee charged by the office for a permit to operate an amusement ride.

(12) “Standards and regulations” means those standards and regulations formulated and enforced by the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-2, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 18; Code 1981, § 25-15-51, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1987, “the” was inserted in paragraph (5).

Editor’s notes.

For application of this statute in 2020 and 2021, see Executive Orders 04.02.20.01, 04.23.20.02, 05.12.20.02,

05.28.20.02, 06.11.20.01, 06.29.20.02, 11.30.20.02, 12.08.20.01, 12.30.20.02,
 07.15.20.01, 07.31.20.02, 08.15.20.01, 01.15.21.01, 01.29.21.02, 02.15.21.01,
 08.31.20.02, 09.15.20.01, 09.30.20.02, 02.26.21.02, 03.12.21.01, and 03.31.21.03.
 10.15.20.01, 10.30.20.02, 11.13.20.01,

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

“Amusement ride” construed. — Department of Labor (now office of Safety Fire Commissioner) is required to inspect triple-passenger push-button controlled rides, but not playground equipment such as “kid mazes” and “ball crawls” which do not have a mechanical device. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-43.

25-15-52. Consultation with persons knowledgeable in area of amusement rides.

The Commissioner shall be authorized to consult with persons knowledgeable in the area of the amusement ride industry and to create committees composed of such consultants to assist the Commissioner in carrying out his or her duties under this article.

History. § 3; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 19; Code 1981, Code 1981, § 34-12-3, enacted by Ga. L. § 25-15-52, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1989, p. 443, 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-53. Formulation of standards and regulations for rides; related powers and duties.

(a) The office shall formulate standards and regulations, or changes to such standards and regulations, for the safe assembly, disassembly, repair, maintenance, use, operation, and inspection of all amusement rides. The standards and regulations shall be reasonable and based upon generally accepted engineering standards, formulas, and practices pertinent to the industry. Formulation and promulgation of such standards and regulations shall be subject to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.” It is recognized that risks presented to the general public by amusement rides which are frequently assembled and disassembled are different from those presented by amusement rides which are not frequently assembled and disassembled. Accordingly, the office is authorized to formulate different standards and regulations with regard to such differing classes of amusement rides.

(b) The office shall:

- (1) Enforce all standards and regulations;
- (2) License inspectors for authorization to inspect amusement rides;
- (3) Issue permits upon compliance with this article and such standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article; and

(4) Establish a fee schedule for the issuance of permits for amusement rides.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 20; Code 1981, § 25-15-53, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules; Regulations; Rider Responsibil-

ity; Warnings and Signage, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Amusement Ride Safety, Rule 120-3-27-.04.

25-15-54. Licensing of private inspectors.

The office may license such private inspectors as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-54,

as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-55. Permit required to operate rides; certificate of inspection.

(a) No amusement ride shall be operated, except for purposes of testing and inspection, until a permit for its operation has been issued by the office. The owner of an amusement ride shall apply for a permit to the office on a form furnished by the office providing such information as the office may require.

(b) No such application shall be complete without including a certificate of inspection from a licensed inspector that the amusement ride meets all relevant provisions of this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant thereto. The cost of obtaining the certificate of inspection from a licensed inspector shall be borne by the owner or operator.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-55,

as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-56. Amusement ride inspection; issuance of certificate of inspection.

(a) All amusement rides shall be inspected annually, and may be inspected more frequently, by a licensed inspector at the owner's or operator's expense. If the amusement ride meets all relevant provisions of this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article, the licensed inspector shall provide to the owner or operator a certificate of inspection. All new amusement rides shall be inspected before commencing public operation.

(b) Amusement rides and attractions may be required to be inspected by an authorized person each time they are assembled or disassembled in accordance with regulations and standards established under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-8, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 34; Code 1981, § 25-15-56, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Amusement Ride Safety, Rule 120-3-27-.07.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Inspection Fee and Permit, Official

25-15-57. Waiver of ride inspection requirement.

The office may waive the requirement of subsection (a) of Code Section 25-15-56 if the owner of an amusement ride gives satisfactory proof to the office that the amusement ride has passed an inspection conducted by a federal agency or by another state whose standards and regulations for the inspection of such an amusement ride are at least as stringent as those adopted pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366,

§ 2; Code 1981, § 25-15-57, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-58. Issuance of permits.

The office shall issue a permit to operate an amusement ride to the owner thereof upon successful completion of a safety inspection of the amusement ride conducted by a licensed inspector and upon receiving an application for permit with a certificate of insurance. The permit shall be valid for the calendar year in which issued.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366,

§ 3; Code 1981, § 25-15-58, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-59. Owner recordkeeping.

The owner shall maintain up-to-date maintenance, inspection, and repair records between inspection periods for each amusement ride in accordance with such standards and regulations as are adopted pursuant to this article. Such records shall contain a copy of all inspection reports commencing with the last annual inspection, a description of all maintenance performed, and a description of any mechanical or structural failures or operational breakdowns and the types of actions taken to rectify these conditions.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-11, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-59, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-60. Restrictions on ride operators.

No person shall be permitted to operate an amusement ride unless he or she is at least 16 years of age. An operator shall be in attendance at all times that an amusement ride is in operation and shall operate no more than one amusement ride at any given time.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-12, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-60, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-61. Accident reports.

The owner of the amusement ride shall report to the office any accident resulting in a fatality or an injury requiring immediate inpatient overnight hospitalization incurred during the operation of any amusement ride. The report shall be in writing, shall describe the nature of the occurrence and injury, and shall be mailed by first-class mail no later than the close of the next business day following the accident. Accidents resulting in a fatality shall also be reported immediately to the office in person or by phone in accordance with regulations adopted by the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-13, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 21; Code 1981, § 25-15-61, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-62. Liability insurance, bond, cash, or security coverage.

(a) No person shall operate an amusement ride unless at the time there is in existence:

(1) A policy of insurance in an appropriate amount determined by regulation insuring the owner and operator (if an independent contractor) against liability for injury to persons arising out of the operation of the amusement ride;

(2) A bond in a like amount; provided, however, that the aggregate liability of the surety under such bond shall not exceed the face amount thereof; or

(3) Cash or other security acceptable to the office.

(b) Regulations under this article shall permit appropriate deductibles or self-insured retention amounts to such policies of insurance. The policy or bond shall be procured from one or more insurers or sureties acceptable to the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-14, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1988, p. 1632,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-62, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-63. Variances.

If any person would incur practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in complying with the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article, or if any person is aggrieved by any order issued by the office, the person may make a written application to the office stating his or her grounds and applying for a variance. The office may grant such a variance in the spirit of the provisions of this article with due regard to public safety. The granting or denial of a variance by the office shall be in writing and shall describe the conditions under which the variance is granted or the reasons for denial. A record shall be kept of all variances granted by the office and such record shall be open to inspection by the public.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-15, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-

63, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-64. Applicability of article.

This article shall not apply to any single-passenger coin operated amusement ride on a stationary foundation or to playground equipment such as swings, seesaws, slides, jungle gyms, rider propelled merry-go-rounds, moonwalks, and live rides.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-16, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1988, p. 1632,

§ 2; Code 1981, § 25-15-64, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Non-mechanical devices exempt. — Department of Labor (now office of Safety Fire Commissioner) is required to inspect triple-passenger push-button controlled

rides, but not playground equipment such as “kid mazes” and “ball crawls” which do not have a mechanical device. 1990 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 90-43.

25-15-65. Compliance of existing rides.

This article shall not be construed so as to prevent the use of any existing amusement ride found to be in a safe condition and to be in conformance with the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article. Owners of amusement rides in operation on or before the effective date of this article shall comply with the provisions of this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article within six months after the adoption of such standards and regulations.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-17, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-

65, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-66. Order for temporary cessation; injunction; penalties.

(a) The Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may issue a written order for the temporary cessation of operation of an amusement ride if it has been determined after inspection to be hazardous or unsafe. Operations shall not resume until such conditions are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative.

(b) In the event that an owner or operator knowingly allows the operation of an amusement ride after the issuing of a temporary cessation, the Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may initiate in the superior court any action for an injunction or writ of mandamus upon the petition of the district attorney or Attorney General. An injunction, without bond, may be granted by the superior court to the Commissioner for the purpose of enforcing this article.

(c)(1) Any person, firm, partnership, or corporation violating the provisions of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense.

(2) In addition to the penalty provisions in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Commissioner shall have the power, after notice and hearing, to levy civil penalties as prescribed in the rules and regulations of the office in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 upon any person, firm, partnership, or corporation failing to adhere to the requirements of this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article. The imposition of a penalty for a violation of this article or the rules and regulations promulgated under this article shall not excuse the violation or permit it to continue.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-18, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1988, p. 1632, § 3; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 4; Code 1981, § 25-15-66, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

Cross references.

Punishment for misdemeanors generally, § 17-10-3.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2012, a misspelling of "Commissioner's" was corrected in the first sentence of subsection (b).

25-15-67. Right of owner or operator to deny entry to rides; inspector's right of access.

The owner or operator of an amusement ride may deny entry to a

person to an amusement ride if in the owner's or operator's opinion the entry may jeopardize the safety of such person or the safety of any other person. Nothing in this Code section shall permit an owner or operator to deny an inspector access to an amusement ride when such inspector is acting within the scope of his or her duties under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-19, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 34; Code 1981, § 25-15-67, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1986, "Code" was inserted preceding "section" in the second sentence.

25-15-68. State liability not created.

Neither this article nor any provision of this article shall be construed to place any liability on the State of Georgia, the office, or the Commissioner with respect to any claim by any person, firm, or corporation relating in any way whatsoever to amusement rides and any injury or damages arising therefrom.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1985, p. 1453, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-

68, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

25-15-69. Regulation of amusement rides by counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions.

No county, municipality, or other political subdivision shall have the power to pass ordinances, resolutions, or other requirements regulating the construction, installation, inspection, maintenance, repair, or operation of amusement rides within the limits of such county, municipality, or other political subdivision. Any such ordinances, resolutions, or other requirements shall be void and of no effect; provided, however, that the provisions of this Code section shall not apply to local zoning ordinances or ordinances regulating location, siting requirements, or other development standards or conditions relative to amusement rides or their time of operation or noise levels generated. Nothing in this article preempts the imposition of regulatory fees or occupation taxes imposed by counties and municipalities pursuant to Chapter 13 of Title 48.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-12-21, enacted by Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 5; Code 1981, § 25-15-

69, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 3/SB 446.

ARTICLE 4

CARNIVAL RIDE SAFETY

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446, redesignated Chapter 13 of Title 34 (Code Sections 34-13-1 through 34-13-3 and 34-13-5 through 34-13-23) as this article.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Carnival

Rides, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Office of Commissioner of Insurance, Safety Fire Commissioner, and Industrial Loan Commissioner, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rule 120-3-28-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

27A Am. Jur. 2d, Entertainment and Sports Law, § 4 et seq. 42 Am. Jur. 2d, Inspection Laws, § 1 et seq. 51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits, § 1 et seq.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 1 et seq.

ALR.

Products liability: mechanical amusement rides and devices, 77 A.L.R.4th 1152.

25-15-80. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Carnival Ride Safety Act."

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-1, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-80, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-81. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Authorized person" means a competent person experienced and instructed in the work to be performed who has been given the responsibility to perform his or her duty by the owner or the owner's representative.

(2) "Carnival ride" means any mechanical device, other than amusement rides regulated under Article 3 of this chapter, known as the "Amusement Ride Safety Act," which carries or conveys passengers along, around, or over a fixed or restricted route or course or within a defined area for the purpose of giving its passengers amusement, pleasure, thrills, or excitement. Such term shall not include any such device which is permanently fixed to a site.

(3) "Certificate fee" means the fee charged by the office for a certificate to operate a carnival ride.

(4) "Certificate of inspection" means a certificate issued by a licensed inspector that a carnival ride meets all relevant provisions of

this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

(5) “Commissioner” means the Safety Fire Commissioner.

(6) “Licensed inspector” means a registered professional engineer or any other person who is found by the office to possess the requisite training and experience to perform competently the inspections required by this article and who is licensed by the office to perform inspections of carnival rides.

(7) “Office” means the office of Safety Fire Commissioner, which is designated to enforce the provisions of this article and to formulate and enforce standards and regulations.

(8) “Operator” means a person or persons actually engaged in or directly controlling the operation of a carnival ride.

(9) “Owner” means a person, including the state or any of its subdivisions, who owns a carnival ride or, in the event that the carnival ride is leased, the lessee.

(10) “Permit” means a permit to operate a carnival ride issued to an owner by the office.

(11) “Permit fee” means the fee charged by the office for a permit to operate a carnival ride.

(12) “Standards and regulations” means those standards and regulations formulated and enforced by the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-2, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 6, § 34; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 6; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 22; Code

1981, § 25-15-81, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1987, “the” was inserted in paragraph (5).

25-15-82. Authority to consult.

The Commissioner shall be authorized to consult with persons knowledgeable in the area of the carnival ride industry and to create committees composed of such consultants to assist the Commissioner in carrying out his or her duties under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1989, p. 443, § 4; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 2001, p.

873, § 23; Code 1981, § 25-15-82, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-83. Safety standards and regulations; licensing of inspectors; ride permits; fees.

(a) The office shall formulate standards and regulations, or changes

to such standards and regulations, for the safe assembly, disassembly, repair, maintenance, use, operation, and inspection of all carnival rides. The standards and regulations shall be reasonable and based upon generally accepted engineering standards, formulas, and practices pertinent to the industry. Formulation and promulgation of such standards and regulations shall be subject to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

(b) The office shall:

- (1) Enforce all standards and regulations;
- (2) License inspectors for authorization to inspect carnival rides; and
- (3) Issue permits upon compliance with this article and such standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article.

(c) The owner or operator of a carnival ride required to be inspected shall pay fees as prescribed in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner. The chief inspector shall transfer all fees so received to the general fund of the state treasury. All funds so deposited in the state treasury are authorized to be appropriated by the General Assembly to the Safety Fire Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 1991, p. 258, § 5; Ga. L. 2001, p. 873, § 24; Code 1981, § 25-15-83, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Application for Permit, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Carnival Rides, Rule 120-3-28-.05.

25-15-84. Licensing of private inspectors.

The office may license such private inspectors as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-6, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-84, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-85. Permit required; application; engineering evaluation.

(a) No carnival ride shall be operated in any calendar year, except for purposes of testing and inspection, until a permit for its operation has been issued by the office. The owner of a carnival ride shall apply for a permit to the office on a form furnished by the office, providing such information as the office may require.

(b) Beginning January 1, 2018, no permit for a carnival ride to operate in this state shall be issued by the office until the carnival

owner submits an engineering evaluation from a licensed engineer that evaluates the functionality of safety mechanisms and the condition of the critical components of the carnival ride. The scope of such engineering evaluation may be further prescribed by standards and regulations of the office that are consistent with this subsection. Such evaluation shall be provided prior to the annual inspection required by Code Section 25-15-86 and use of the carnival ride by the general public. The submission of such evaluation shall only be required the first time the carnival owner applies for a permit for the carnival ride in this state on or after January 1, 2018.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-7, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-85, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446; Ga. L. 2017, p. 578, § 1/SB 141.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Application for Permit, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rules of Safety Fire Commissioner, Rules and Regulations for Carnival Rides, Rule 120-3-28-.05.

25-15-86. Inspections.

All carnival rides and attractions shall be inspected annually and may be inspected more frequently by a licensed inspector at the owner's or operator's expense. If the carnival ride meets all relevant provisions of this article and the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article, the licensed inspector shall provide to the owner or operator a certificate of inspection. All new carnival rides shall be inspected before commencing public operation.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-8, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 1991, p. 258, § 6; Code 1981, § 25-15-86, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1988, "owner's" was substituted for "owner" in the first sentence.

25-15-87. Waiver of inspection for rides inspected by other entity.

The office may waive the requirement of Code Section 25-15-86 if the owner of a carnival ride gives satisfactory proof to the office that the carnival ride has passed an inspection conducted by a federal agency or by another state whose standards and regulations for the inspection of such a carnival ride are at least as stringent as those adopted pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-9, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 7; Code 1981, § 25-15-87, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-88. Issuance of permit.

The office shall issue a permit to operate a carnival ride to the owner thereof upon successful completion of a safety inspection by a licensed inspector, upon completion by the owner of the application for a permit, and upon presentation of a certificate of inspection or waiver thereof by the office. The permit shall be valid for the calendar year in which issued.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-10, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-88, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1988, “upon” was inserted preceding “presentation” near the end of the first sentence.

25-15-89. Maintenance, inspection, and repair records.

The owner shall maintain up-to-date maintenance, inspection, and repair records between inspection periods for each carnival ride in accordance with such standards and regulations as are adopted pursuant to this article. Such records shall contain a copy of all inspection reports commencing with the last annual inspection, a description of all maintenance performed, and a description of any mechanical or structural failures or operational breakdowns and the types of actions taken to rectify these conditions.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-11, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-89, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-90. Ride operators; minimum standards for operation of rides.

(a) No person shall be permitted to operate a carnival ride unless he or she is at least 16 years of age. An operator shall be in attendance at all times that a carnival ride is in operation and shall operate no more than one carnival ride at any given time.

(b) No carnival ride shall be operated at standards below those recommended by the manufacturer of such carnival ride or below the standards adopted or variants approved by the office, whichever is greater.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-12, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-90, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-91. Accident reports.

The owner of the carnival ride shall report to the office any accident

incurred during the operation of any carnival ride resulting in a fatality or an injury requiring medical attention from a licensed medical facility. The report shall be in writing, shall describe the nature of the occurrence and injury, and shall be delivered in person or mailed by first-class mail no later than the close of the next business day following the accident. Accidents resulting in a fatality shall also be reported immediately to the office in person or by phone in accordance with regulations adopted by the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-13, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950, § 3; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 2001,

p. 873, § 25; Code 1981, § 25-15-91, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-92. Liability insurance, bond, or other security required.

(a) No person shall operate a carnival ride unless at the time there is in existence:

(1) A policy of insurance in an amount not less than \$1 million (if an independent contractor) against liability for injury to persons arising out of the operation of the carnival ride;

(2) A bond in a like amount; provided, however, that the aggregate liability of the surety under such bond shall not exceed the face amount thereof; or

(3) Cash or other security acceptable to the office.

(b) Regulations under this article shall permit appropriate deductibles or self-insured retention amounts to such policies of insurance. The policy or bond shall be procured from one or more insurers or sureties acceptable to the office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-14, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950, § 4; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 1991,

p. 94, § 34; Code 1981, § 25-15-92, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-93. Variances from standards and regulations.

If any person would incur practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in complying with the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article, or if any person is aggrieved by any order issued by the office, the person may make a written application to the office stating his or her grounds and applying for a variance. The office may grant such a variance in the spirit of the provisions of this article with due regard to public safety. The granting or denial of a variance by the office shall be in writing and shall describe the conditions under which the variance is granted or the reasons for denial. A record shall be kept

of all variances granted by the office and such record shall be open to inspection by the public.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-15, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-93, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-94. Exempted rides.

This article shall not apply to any single-passenger coin operated carnival ride on a stationary foundation or to playground equipment such as swings, seesaws, slides, jungle gyms, rider propelled merry-go-rounds, moonwalks, and live rides.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-16, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950,

§ 5; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-94, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-95. Existing rides.

This article shall not be construed so as to prevent the use of any existing carnival ride found to be in a safe condition and to be in conformance with the standards and regulations adopted pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-17, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-95, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-96. Order for temporary cessation; injunction; penalties.

(a) The Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may issue a written order for the temporary cessation of operation of a carnival ride if it has been determined after inspection to be hazardous or unsafe. Operations shall not resume until such conditions are corrected to the satisfaction of the Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative.

(b) In the event that an owner or operator knowingly allows the operations of a carnival ride after the issuing of a temporary cessation, the Commissioner or the Commissioner's authorized representative may initiate in the superior court any action for an injunction or writ of mandamus upon the petition of the district attorney or Attorney General. An injunction, without bond, may be granted by the superior court to the Commissioner for the purpose of enforcing this article.

(c)(1) Any person, firm, partnership, or corporation violating the provisions of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense.

(2) In addition to the penalty provisions in paragraph (1) of this

subsection, the Commissioner shall have the power, after notice and hearing, to levy civil penalties as prescribed in the rules and regulations of the office in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 upon any person, firm, partnership, or corporation failing to adhere to the requirements of this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article. The imposition of a penalty for a violation of this article or the rules and regulations promulgated under this article shall not excuse the violation or permit it to continue.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-18, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1988, p. 950, § 6; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 8; Code 1981, § 25-15-96, as

redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Cross references.

Punishment for misdemeanors generally, § 17-10-3.

25-15-97. Right of owner or operator to deny entry to rides; right of inspector to access ride.

The owner or operator of a carnival ride may deny entry to a person to a carnival ride if in the owner's or operator's opinion the entry may jeopardize the safety of such person or the safety of any other person. Nothing in this Code section shall permit an owner or operator to deny an inspector access to a carnival ride when such inspector is acting within the scope of his or her duties under this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-19, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945,

§ 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-97, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-98. Posting of age, size, and weight requirements for rides.

(a) The owner or operator of a carnival ride shall post a clearly visible sign at the location of each ride and at the location of tickets sales for each ride which states any age, weight, or height requirements of the ride which are necessary as a safeguard against injury.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any owner or operator to permit entry to a carnival ride to any person who does not meet the posted age, size, and weight requirements for such ride.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-98, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

1990, a misspelling of the word "requirements" in subsection (b) was corrected.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1, designated the former provisions of Code Section 34-13-20 as former Code Section 34-13-22.

25-15-99. Itinerant carnival rides to be continuously registered with in-state agent.

The owner of any itinerant carnival ride which is located within this state shall continuously maintain in this state a registered agent of record who may be an individual who resides in the state and whose business address is identical with the address of the owner's required office.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-21, enacted by Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-

99, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

25-15-100. State liability not created.

Neither this article nor any provision of this article shall be construed to place any liability on the State of Georgia, the office, or the Commissioner with respect to any claim by any person, firm, or corporation relating in any way whatsoever to carnival rides and any injury or damages arising therefrom.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1986, p. 330, § 2; Code 1981, § 34-13-22, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1; Code 1981, § 25-15-100, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1990, p. 1945, § 1 redesignated the former provisions of Code Section 34-13-20 as former Code Section 34-13-22.

25-15-101. Regulation of carnival rides by counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions.

No county, municipality, or other political subdivision shall have the power to pass ordinances, resolutions, or other requirements regulating the construction, installation, inspection, maintenance, repair, or operation of carnival rides within the limits of such county, municipality, or other political subdivision. Any such ordinances, resolutions, or other requirements shall be void and of no effect; provided, however, that the provisions of this Code section shall not apply to local zoning ordinances or ordinances regulating location, siting requirements, or other development standards or conditions relative to carnival rides or their time of operation or noise levels generated. Nothing in this article preempts the imposition of regulatory fees or occupation taxes imposed by counties and municipalities pursuant to Chapter 13 of Title 48.

History.

Code 1981, § 34-13-23, enacted by Ga. L. 1995, p. 366, § 9; Code 1981, § 25-15-

101, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446.

ARTICLE 5

REQUIREMENTS FOR SCAFFOLDING AND STAGING DESIGN

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 4/SB 446, redesignated Code Section 34-1-1 as this article.

25-15-110. Requirements for scaffolding and staging design; inspection by Safety Fire Commissioner.

(a)(1) All scaffolding or staging that is swung or suspended from an overhead support or erected with stationary supports and is suspended or rises 30 feet or more above the ground shall have a safety rail properly attached, bolted, braced, and otherwise secured; and the safety rail shall rise at least 34 inches above the floor or main portions of such scaffolding or staging and extend for the full length of such staging and along the ends thereof with only such openings as may be necessary for the delivery of materials being used on such scaffold or staging. Such scaffolding or staging shall also be so fastened as to prevent it from swaying from the building or structure. However, this paragraph shall not apply to any scaffolding or staging which is wholly within the interior of a building or other structure and which covers the entire floor space therein.

(2) It shall be unlawful for any person to employ or direct others to perform labor of any kind in the erecting, demolishing, repairing, altering, cleaning, or painting of a building or other structure without first having furnished proper protection to such person so employed or directed, as provided in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(b) All scaffolding or staging shall be so constructed that it will bear at least four times the weight required to be hanging therefrom or placed thereon when in use.

(c)(1) The Safety Fire Commissioner, upon receipt of any complaint, shall make or cause to be made an immediate inspection of the scaffold, or mechanical device connected therewith, concerning which complaint has been made.

(2) The Commissioner shall attach to every scaffold, staging, mechanism, or mechanical device inspected by him or her a certificate bearing the Commissioner's name and the date of inspection, and the certificate shall plainly state whether he or she has found the scaffolding, staging, or mechanical device "safe" or "unsafe."

(3) If the Commissioner finds any scaffolding, staging, or mechanical device complained of to be unsafe, the Commissioner shall at once notify in writing the person responsible for the erection and

maintenance of the scaffolding, staging, or mechanical device that the Commissioner has found it to be unsafe. Such notice may be served personally upon the person responsible under the law or may be perfected by affixing such notice in a conspicuous place on the scaffold, staging, or mechanical device found unsafe. The manner of service shall be within the discretion of the Commissioner. The Commissioner shall then prohibit the use of such scaffolding, staging, or mechanical device by any person until all danger has been removed or until it has been made to comply with the terms of this Code section by alteration, reconstruction, demolition, or replacement, as the Commissioner may direct.

(d) Any person who willfully, knowingly, and persistently continues the use of a scaffold, staging, or other mechanical device in violation of any provision of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1933, p. 111, §§ 1-7; Ga. L. 1967, p. 792, § 1; Code 1981, § 34-1-1; Code 1981, § 25-15-110, as redesignated by Ga. L. 2012, p. 1144, § 6/SB 446.

Cross references.

General duty of employers with respect to employment safety, § 34-2-10.

Law reviews.

For survey article on labor and employment law for the period from June 1, 2002 to May 31, 2003, see 55 Mercer L. Rev. 303 (2003).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability for personal injury by fire escape, 42 A.L.R. 1111.

Constitutionality of statute requiring protection against occupational or industrial diseases and accidents with respect to definiteness and completeness, 99 A.L.R. 613.

Duty of owner of premises to furnish independent contractor or his employee a safe place of work, where contract is for repairs, 31 A.L.R.2d 1375.

Liability of owner or occupant of premises to building or construction inspector coming upon premises in discharge of duty, 28 A.L.R.3d 891.

Boiler and machinery insurance: risks and losses covered by policy or provision expressly covering boilers and machinery, 49 A.L.R.4th 336.

Tort liability for window washer's injury or death, 69 A.L.R.4th 207.

TITLE 26

FOOD, DRUGS, AND COSMETICS

Chap.

1. General Provisions, 26-1-1.
2. Standards, Labeling, and Adulteration of Food, 26-2-1 through 26-2-466.
3. Standards, Labeling, and Adulteration of Drugs and Cosmetics, 26-3-1 through 26-3-24.
4. Pharmacists and Pharmacies, 26-4-1 through 26-4-214.
5. Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Programs, 26-5-1 through 26-5-80.

Cross references.

Control of pesticides, § 2-7-50 et seq.

Controlled substances and dangerous drugs, § 16-13-1 et seq.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. and referral service; inspection of donated food.
26-1-1. Food donation information

26-1-1. Food donation information and referral service; inspection of donated food.

(a) The Department of Agriculture shall maintain an information and referral service for persons and organizations which have notified the department of their desire to donate food to nonprofit organizations.

(b) Appropriate state and local departments and agencies are authorized to inspect donated food items for wholesomeness and may establish procedures for the handling of the food items.

History.

Code 1933, § 105-1106, enacted by Ga. L. 1980, p. 69, § 1.

Cross references.

Liability from donation of food for use or distribution by nonprofit organizations, § 51-1-31.

Law reviews.

For article, "Consolidation by Compact: A Remedy for Preemption of State Food and Drug Laws," see 14 J. Pub. L. 276 (1965).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application of the sampling provisions of the Federal

Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, or other similar acts, 155 A.L.R. 910.

CHAPTER 2

STANDARDS, LABELING, AND ADULTERATION OF FOOD

Article 1		Sec.	
General Provisions			
Sec.		26-2-31.	biotics or growth hormones; "Georgia lean" beef.
26-2-1.	Lard, mixed edible fat, and edible cottonseed oil.		[Reserved] Repacking of flour, grits, hominy, and cornmeal; exceptions.
26-2-2.	Meat, fish, and poultry to be sold by net weight; exceptions; penalty.	26-2-32.	Honey and imitation honey labels.
26-2-3.	Obstruction of inspectors and others in performance of duties.	26-2-33.	Enforcement of article by Commissioner; employment of personnel.
26-2-4.	Labeling, sale, or advertising of spring water.	26-2-34.	Promulgation of regulations; notice and hearing for proposed amendments; variances or waivers.
Article 2		26-2-34.1.	Confidential information.
Adulteration and Misbranding of Food		26-2-35.	Food regulations.
		26-2-36.	Right of access to food establishments and transport vehicles.
26-2-20.	Short title.		
26-2-21.	Definitions.	26-2-37.	Temporary permits.
26-2-22.	Prohibited acts.	26-2-38.	Detention or embargo of adulterated or misbranded food.
26-2-23.	Injunctions for violations of Code Section 26-2-22.		
26-2-24.	Penalty for violation of Code Section 26-2-22; exceptions.	26-2-39.	Publication of reports and dissemination of information in the interest of public health and consumer protection.
26-2-25.	Licensing of food sales establishments.		
26-2-26.	When food deemed adulterated.	26-2-40.	Written notice or warning sufficient for minor violations of article.
26-2-27.	Poisonous or deleterious substances in food; exception for required substances.	26-2-41.	Prosecution of violations; notice to defendant prior to institution of criminal proceeding.
26-2-27.1.	Testing of specimens from food processing centers; consistency in standards; cost; retention of records from testing; exemption.		
26-2-28.	When food deemed misbranded.		
26-2-29.	Misleading advertisements; certain practices declared misleading.		
26-2-30.	Factors to be taken into account in determining whether labels or advertisements are misleading.	26-2-60.	Short title.
		26-2-61.	Legislative intent.
		26-2-62.	Definitions.
26-2-30.1.	Beef produced without anti-	26-2-63.	Federal and state cooperation.

Article 3

Meat Inspection

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec.		Sec.	
26-2-64.	Concurrent enforcement jurisdiction.		parts; reinspection; removal of inspectors.
	PART 2	26-2-104.	Inspection of carcasses, parts, meat, and meat products brought into or returned to slaughtering or packing establishments; limitations on entry of carcasses, parts, meat, and meat products.
	ENFORCEMENT OF ARTICLE		
26-2-80.	Promulgation of regulations.		
26-2-81.	Powers of Commissioner; reports.	26-2-105.	Inspection of meat food products where prepared; inspection markings; disposition of condemned meat food products; removal of inspectors.
26-2-82.	Administrative penalties; judicial review.		
26-2-83.	Authority to refuse or withdraw meat inspection service.	26-2-106.	Inspection of meat and meat food products in retail and other food service establishments; disposition of condemned meat; sale or display of noninspected meat or meat food products.
26-2-84.	Detention of carcasses, meat, and meat food products suspected of being adulterated or misbranded; removal of official marks.		
26-2-85.	Seizure and condemnation of carcasses, meat, and meat food products.	26-2-107.	Labeling of meat, meat food products, and carcasses; standards and definitions; use of false or misleading labels or containers.
26-2-86.	Injunctions.		
26-2-87.	Written notice or warning sufficient for minor violations.	26-2-108.	Sanitary inspections of slaughter and packing establishments; sanitation regulations; labeling adulterated meat and meat food products.
26-2-88.	Penalties for fraud or distribution of adulterated articles; penalties for slaughter or distribution of diseased or cancerous animals.		
	PART 3	26-2-109.	Timing of examination and inspection of slaughtered animals and food products.
	INSPECTION, HANDLING, AND LABELING STANDARDS	26-2-110.	Slaughter, preparation, sale, or transportation of animals, meat, or meat food products generally.
26-2-100.	Duties of inspectors.	26-2-110.1.	Approved methods for handling and slaughtering of animals; designation by Commissioner of methods of handling and slaughtering.
26-2-100.1.	Examinations and inspections of nontraditional livestock carcasses, meats, and meat food products.	26-2-111.	Labeling and preparation of carcasses, meat, and meat food products of equines.
26-2-101.	Inspections and examinations generally.	26-2-112.	Inspection exceptions; labeling and handling of custom slaughtered and prepared meat or meat food products.
26-2-102.	Inspection of animals prior to slaughter or preparation; slaughtering and examination of diseased animals; refusal or suspension of inspections.	26-2-113.	Storage and handling regu-
26-2-103.	Post-mortem inspection and marking of carcasses and parts; disposition of condemned carcasses and		

Sec.

- lations for carcasses, meat, and meat food products.
- 26-2-114. Fraudulent practices.
- 26-2-115. Use of "Georgia" in trademark, trade name, service mark, or advertisement.
- 26-2-116. Applicability of part to federally inspected slaughtering and packing establishments.

PART 4

MEAT PROCESSORS AND RELATED INDUSTRIES

- 26-2-130. Buying, selling, transporting, or receiving of dead, dying, disabled, or diseased animals.
- 26-2-131. Registration of dealers in dead, dying, diseased, or disabled animals.
- 26-2-132. Maintenance and inspection of records.
- 26-2-133. Identification of carcasses, meat, or meat food products not intended for human use.

Article 4

Advertisement and Sale of Meat Generally

- 26-2-150. Legislative intent.
- 26-2-151. Promulgation of rules and regulations regarding deceptive advertising of meat.
- 26-2-152. Advertisement or sale of beef, pork, and lamb; "bait and switch" advertising.
- 26-2-153. Sale of partial or whole carcasses.
- 26-2-154. Penalty for violation of Code Sections 26-2-150 through 26-2-153.
- 26-2-155. Food service establishment display of information if serving imported beef.
- 26-2-156. Slaughter of horses for human consumption or other purposes.
- 26-2-157. Signage and label required for sale of horse meat.
- 26-2-158. Disclosure required for sale of horse meat.
- 26-2-159. Promulgation of regulations.

Sec.

- 26-2-160. Sale of dog meat restricted; packaging and label requirements.
- 26-2-161. Penalty for violations of Code Section 26-2-157, 26-2-158, 26-2-159, or 26-2-160.

Article 5

Animals Suspected of Bearing Any Residue Causing Contaminated Meat

- 26-2-180. Definitions.
- 26-2-181. Promulgation of rules and regulations.
- 26-2-182. Inspection and quarantine of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination.
- 26-2-183. Duration of quarantine or detention of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination.
- 26-2-184. Orders for destruction of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination; compliance with federal tolerances.
- 26-2-185. Injunctions.
- 26-2-186. Penalty.

Article 6

Meat, Poultry, and Dairy Processing Plants

- 26-2-200. Definitions.
- 26-2-201. Supervision and control of sanitary conditions in dairies and meat, poultry, and dairy processing plants; designation of inspectors.
- 26-2-202. Promulgation of rules and regulations.
- 26-2-203. Power of inspection.
- 26-2-204. Inspection of dairies and meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants; right to take and test samples.
- 26-2-205. Wholesomeness inspection of meat, poultry, and dairy products offered for sale; inspection of livestock slaughtered; marking system for inspection purposes.
- 26-2-206. Wholesomeness inspection

Sec.		Sec.	
	of meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants on cost basis or less.	26-2-240.	Adulterated ice cream.
26-2-207.	Sanitary condition of dairy equipment and premises; adequate supply and drainage of water.	26-2-241.	Testing of milk, cream, or other dairy products.
26-2-208.	Sale, offer for sale, or possession of dairy, animal, or poultry products under conditions other than sanitary.	26-2-242.	Standards and requirements for sale of milk and milk products.
26-2-209.	Permanent license for meat processing plants.	26-2-243.	Intermingling of Grade A milk or milk products with other grades.
26-2-210.	Permanent license for poultry processing plants.	26-2-244.	Standards and conditions for importation of milk and milk products.
26-2-211.	Statistics on animals and poultry slaughtered; maintenance of records.	26-2-245.	Condemnation and coloring of milk and milk products produced, processed, or delivered in violation of laws of state.
26-2-212.	County and municipal ordinances dealing with meats, poultry, and dairy products.	26-2-246.	Furnishing of records by persons operating under article.
26-2-213.	Injunctions.	26-2-247.	Enforcement of article generally.
26-2-213.1.	Applicability to individuals and entities governed by federal acts.	26-2-248.	Injunctions.
26-2-214.	Inspection of federally inspected meat, poultry, or dairy products; exception for horse slaughter operations.	26-2-249.	Unlawful acts.
26-2-215.	Penalty.	26-2-250.	Penalty.
Article 7		Article 8	
Milk and Milk Products		Eggs	
26-2-230.	Short title.	26-2-260.	Definitions.
26-2-231.	Definitions.	26-2-261.	Classification of eggs.
26-2-232.	Duties of Commissioner generally.	26-2-262.	Registration of entities dealing in eggs.
26-2-233.	Promulgation and amendment of rules and regulations by Commissioner.	26-2-263.	Egg wholesaler and handler licenses.
26-2-234.	Licensure procedure.	26-2-264.	Sales by entities dealing in eggs; exemption of producers from taxation and licensing.
26-2-235.	Cream tester license.	26-2-265.	Dealer's invoices of sales to be furnished to Department of Agriculture on request; exception for sales to consumers.
26-2-236.	[Reserved] License requirements — Operators of milk and cream buying stations.	26-2-266.	Inspectors and assistants; confiscation and destruction of eggs found unfit for human consumption.
26-2-237.	[Reserved] License requirements — Milk and cream brokers.	26-2-267.	Promulgation of rules, regulations, grades, and standards; powers of inspectors.
26-2-238.	Standards and requirements generally.	26-2-268.	Information labels affixed to cases of eggs.
26-2-239.	Standards and requirements for frozen desserts generally.	26-2-269.	Placard to be displayed; contents.

- Sec.
26-2-270. Reciprocal marketing agree-
ment to vary labeling re-
quirements.
26-2-271. "Withhold From Sale Or-
ders"; cost of inspection and
release.
26-2-272. Egg candler and grader li-
censes.
26-2-273. Refrigeration and other
handling requirements.
26-2-274. Penalty; duty of prosecuting
attorneys to prosecute viola-
tions.

Article 9

Grains and Bread

- 26-2-290. Definitions.
26-2-291. Vitamins and ingredients in
flour; specification changes;
milling process.
26-2-292. Vitamins and ingredients in
bread; specification
changes.
26-2-293. Vitamins and ingredients in
degerminated corn meal
and degerminated hominy
grits; specification changes;
milling process.
26-2-294. Exemptions.
26-2-295. Labeling requirements.
26-2-296. Duties of Commissioner of
Agriculture.
26-2-297. Penalty.

Article 10

Fish and Other Seafoods

- 26-2-310. Definitions.
26-2-311. Administration by Commis-
sioner of Agriculture.
26-2-312. Wholesale fish dealers' li-
censes.
26-2-313. Applications for wholesale
fish dealers' licenses.
26-2-314. License revocation.
26-2-315. Promulgation of rules and
regulations regarding sani-
tation, distribution, and
transportation of fish and
seafoods.
26-2-316. Suitable equipment and
sanitation for wholesale fish
dealers.

- Sec.
26-2-317. Equipment for traveling fish
dealers.
26-2-318. Inspection of fish and sea-
foods.
26-2-319. [Reserved] Allocation of li-
cense fees.
26-2-320. Penalty.

Article 11

Kosher Foods

- 26-2-330 through 26-2-335. [Reserved].

Article 12

Soft Drinks

- 26-2-350. Definitions.
26-2-351. License for manufacture
and bottling; separate li-
cense for each business or
bottling or manufacturing
plant.
26-2-352. Sanitary standards and
specifications for the manu-
facture, bottling, and distri-
bution of soft drinks or soft
drink syrup.
26-2-353. Promulgation of rules and
regulations; administrative
personnel.
26-2-354. Suspension or revocation of
license; hearing.
26-2-355. Sanitary inspection of build-
ing, area, structure, plant,
or vehicle used in the manu-
facture, bottling, or distri-
bution of soft drinks or soft
drink syrup.
26-2-356. Applicability of article to
dairy or milk processing or
distributing plants other-
wise licensed.
26-2-357. Penalty.

Article 13

Food Service Establishments

- 26-2-370. Definitions.
26-2-371. Food service establishment
and mobile food service es-
tablishment permits.
26-2-372. Permits — Issuance; sus-
pension, revocation, or de-
nial; notice and hearing.
26-2-373. Promulgation of rules, regu-

Sec.

Article 16**Common-sense Consumption**

- lations, and standards by Department of Public Health and county boards of health; exemption for non-profit schools and institutions producing own milk.
- 26-2-373.1. Use of hair nets or hats by food preparers; penalty.
- 26-2-374. Contents and posting of notices relating to assistance to persons choking; relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid.
- 26-2-375. Enforcement of article; inspection of food service and food sales establishments.
- 26-2-376. Review of final order or determination by Department of Public Health; appeal to superior court.
- 26-2-377. Penalty.
- 26-2-378. Disclosure of meat products that contain extenders; exception.
- 26-2-379. Mobile food service establishment permits; inspections; fees.

Article 14**Nonprofit Food Sales and Food Service**

- 26-2-390. Definitions.
- 26-2-391. Permits for nonprofit food sales and food service at events; duration of permit; issuance of subsequent permits.
- 26-2-392. Food safety standards for food sales and food service at events by nonprofit organizations.
- 26-2-393. Enforcement of article.

Article 15**Sale of Meat, Poultry, or Seafood from Mobile Vehicles**

- 26-2-410. Definitions.
- 26-2-411. Licensing and inspection of mobile vehicles.
- 26-2-412. Rules and regulations.
- 26-2-413. Penalty.

Sec.

- 26-2-430. Short title.
- 26-2-431. Definitions.
- 26-2-432. Exemption from liability of food distributors for long-term consumption of food.
- 26-2-433. Exception to nonliability of food distributors.
- 26-2-434. Requirements of complaint.
- 26-2-435. Discovery.
- 26-2-436. Applicability.

Article 17**Cooperation in Implementation of Federal Food Safety Modernization**

- 26-2-440. Definitions.
- 26-2-441. Designation of cooperating agency.

Article 18**Raw Dairy**

- 26-2-450. Definitions.
- 26-2-451. Raw milk for human consumption.
- 26-2-452. Enforcement by Commissioner.
- 26-2-453. Rules and regulations.
- 26-2-454. Permit required.
- 26-2-455. Examination of raw milk by department; adulterated milk.
- 26-2-456. Bottling, packaging, and sealing raw milk; labeling.
- 26-2-457. Sampling and collection; testing and analysis.
- 26-2-458. Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards.
- 26-2-459. Sanitation requirements.
- 26-2-460. Health status of animals; testing and records.
- 26-2-461. Reporting of safety concerns; product recall or notifications to consumers.
- 26-2-462. Revocation or cancellation of permit or license.
- 26-2-463. Furnishing of data and statistics and maintenance of records by operators.
- 26-2-464. Enjoining continuing violations.

Sec. 26-2-465.	Unlawful activities.	Sec. 26-2-466.	Penalty.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Retail Food Sales, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-1-.01 et seq.

Salvageable Foods and Single Serve

Utensil Items, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Additional Regulations Applicable to Salvageable Foods and Single Service Items, Rule 40-7-2-.01.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.**

Foreign Substance in Food or Beverage, 30 POF2d 1.

Food Poisoning, 31 POF2d 31.

ALR.

Products liability: sufficiency of evi-

dence to support product misuse defense in actions concerning food, drugs, and other products intended for ingestion, 58 A.L.R.4th 7.

ARTICLE 1**GENERAL PROVISIONS****26-2-1. Lard, mixed edible fat, and edible cottonseed oil.**

The standards for lard, mixed edible fats, and cottonseed oils are defined as follows:

(1) "Lard" means the fat of freshly slaughtered swine. It shall not be made from a diseased animal or any portion of an animal unfit for food or contain less than 99 percent of pure fat.

(2) "Mixed edible fat" means a mixture which contains not less than 99 percent of sweet mixed fat and may consist of a mixture of refined cottonseed oil or other edible vegetable oils with sweet beef fat or other edible animal fat and shall be sold under a registered or proprietary brand and properly labeled with a distinctive trademark or name bearing the name of the manufacturer.

(3) "Edible cottonseed oil" means refined cottonseed oil, free from disagreeable taste or odors. White cottonseed oil for edible purposes is cottonseed oil which has been refined in such a manner as to be nearly colorless, flavorless, and odorless. Winter cottonseed oils for edible purposes are those from which a portion of the stearine has been removed; they may be either white or yellow.

History.

Ga. L. 1906, p. 83, § 21; Civil Code 1910, § 2115; Code 1933, § 42-111; Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 23.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, §§ 2101, 2104, and 2117, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Purpose of the law against adulteration or misbranding is to protect consumers from deception or injury, and it is to be conclusively presumed that the law was adopted to prevent injury to the public health by the sale and transportation in intrastate commerce of misbranded and adulterated foods. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Products made wholly from veg-

etable oils, water, salt, and harmless coloring matter are not prohibited from being sold. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, §§ 2101, 2104, and 2117).

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2117 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-1), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2117).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms.

12 Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms, Food, § 2.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 25.

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

26-2-2. Meat, fish, and poultry to be sold by net weight; exceptions; penalty.

(a) All meat, meat products, fish, and poultry offered or exposed for sale or sold commercially shall be sold by net weight only except when sold for immediate consumption on the premises or when sold as a cooked food but not in a package or when sold for breeding purposes or when sold as pets or for other purposes than for human or animal consumption.

(b) Any person who violates this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 75, §§ 1, 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 21 et seq., 37.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

Products Liability: Necessity and Admissibility of Expert or Opinion Evidence as to Causation of Injury to User of Food Products and Equipment, 52 A.L.R.7th 4.

26-2-3. Obstruction of inspectors and others in performance of duties.

Any manufacturer, dealer, or other person who shall impede, obstruct, hinder, or otherwise prevent or attempt to prevent any inspector or other person in the performance of his duty in collecting samples or otherwise in connection with this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not less than \$10.00 nor more than \$50.00. Any violation of this chapter, relating to feeding stuffs for domestic animals, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$50.00 or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, or both, in the discretion of the court.

History.

Ga. L. 1906, p. 83, § 20; Penal Code 1910, § 452; Code 1933, § 42-9905.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or

mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

26-2-4. Labeling, sale, or advertising of spring water.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “spring water” means water which is: (1) derived from an underground formation from which water flows naturally to the surface of the earth; (2) not derived from a municipal system or public water supply; and (3) collected only at the spring or through a bore hole into the same underground water-bearing zone; provided, however, that water collected with the assistance of external force to protect the water shall retain all the physical properties of and be of the same chemical composition and quality as the water that flows naturally to the surface.

(b) Any water which meets the definition of “spring water” as specified in subsection (a) of this Code section may lawfully be labeled, sold, advertised, and otherwise represented as “spring water” or “natural spring water,” notwithstanding any other contrary provision of any law or regulation of this state. No law or regulation of this state shall: (1) require or be construed to require any disclaimer in connection with such labeling, sale, advertisement, or representation; or (2) require or be construed to require such water to be additionally identified as any other type of water.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-4, enacted by Ga. L.

1992, p. 1016, § 1; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90.

ARTICLE 2**ADULTERATION AND MISBRANDING OF FOOD****Cross references.**

Authority of Commissioner of Agriculture to impose penalty in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

Powers and duties of Commissioners with regard to use, and advertisement of weights and measures pertaining to commodities generally, § 10-2-1 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Purpose of Georgia Food Act. — The “Georgia Food Act” (O.C.G.A. § 26-2-20 et seq.), is a consumer protection Act, designed not to render the workplace a safe environment, but to prevent the sale and distribution of adulterated or misbranded foods to consumers. While safety in the workplace and compensation for injuries arising out of work activities are indeed matters of contemporary concern, they are the subject of other legislative enactments on both the state and federal level. *Potts v. Fidelity Fruit & Produce Co.*, 165 Ga. App. 546, 301 S.E.2d 903, 1983 Ga. App. LEXIS 1942 (1983).

Determining if violation is negligence per se. — In determining whether the violation of a statute or ordinance, such as O.C.G.A. § 26-2-20 et seq., is negligence per se as to a particular person, it is necessary to examine the purposes of the legislation and decide: (1) whether the injured person falls within

the class of persons the statute was intended to protect; and (2) whether the harm complained of was the harm the statute was intended to guard against. *Potts v. Fidelity Fruit & Produce Co.*, 165 Ga. App. 546, 301 S.E.2d 903, 1983 Ga. App. LEXIS 1942 (1983).

Injuries sustained other than in consumption of food not actionable under Georgia Food Act. — When the plaintiff brought an action to recover for personal injuries which the plaintiff allegedly sustained when bitten by a spider while unloading bananas from a truck and the incident occurred during the course of the plaintiff’s employment because the alleged injuries did not arise incident to the plaintiff’s consumption of the bananas, the trial court was correct in concluding that O.C.G.A. § 26-2-20 et seq. affords the plaintiff no basis for recovery. *Potts v. Fidelity Fruit & Produce Co.*, 165 Ga. App. 546, 301 S.E.2d 903, 1983 Ga. App. LEXIS 1942 (1983).

26-2-20. Short title.

This article may be cited as the “Georgia Food Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 1.

a two-year survey, see 71 Mercer L. Rev. 223 (2019).

Law reviews.

For annual survey on product liability:

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Genuine issue of fact remained as to causation of food poisoning. — In an action by rehearsal dinner guests against a caterer alleging food poisoning, summary judgment for the caterer was

error; the caterer’s circumstantial evidence of the absence of causation (others did not become ill, the guests consumed other food and drink, and did not become ill until days later) was contradicted by

other evidence. *Patterson v. Kevon, LLC*, 304 Ga. 232, 818 S.E.2d 575, 2018 Ga. LEXIS 536 (2018).

Res ipsa loquitur principle misapplied in consumer food product liability case. — In a consumer food product liability case, the trial court misapplied the doctrine of *res ipsa loquitur* because having found that the doctrine applied, the trial court was obligated to allow the

jury to determine whether the defendant's negligence, if any, was the proximate cause of the plaintiff's injuries under a jury charge that included the principle of *res ipsa loquitur* instead of granting summary judgment to the defendant. *Matthews v. Yoplait USA, Inc.*, 352 Ga. App. 591, 835 S.E.2d 393, 2019 Ga. App. LEXIS 601 (2019).

26-2-21. Definitions.

(a) As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture.

(2) "Contaminated with filth" applies to any food not securely protected from dust, dirt, and, as far as may be necessary, by all reasonable means, from all foreign or injurious contamination.

(3) "Federal act" means the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (Title 21 U.S.C. Section 301, et seq., 52 Stat. Section 1040, et seq.).

(4) "Food" means:

(A) Articles used for food or drink for human consumption;

(B) Chewing gum; and

(C) Articles used for components of any such articles.

(5) "Food sales establishment" means retail and wholesale grocery stores; retail seafood stores and places of business; food processing plants, except those food processing plants which are currently required to obtain a license from the Commissioner under any other provision of law; bakeries; confectioneries; fruit, nuts, and vegetable stores or roadside stands; wholesale sandwich and salad manufacturers, including vending machines and operations connected therewith; and places of business and similar establishments, mobile or permanent, engaged in the sale of food primarily for consumption off the premises. Within a food sales establishment, there may be a food service component, not separately operated, which may serve customers on site. This food service component shall be considered as part of the food sales establishment. Such term shall not include:

(A) The food sales component of any food service establishment defined in Code Section 26-2-370;

(B) Food service establishments as defined in Code Section 26-2-370;

(C) Establishments engaged in the sale of food primarily for

consumption off the premises if such sale is an authorized part of and occurs upon the site of a fair or festival which:

- (i) Is sponsored by a political subdivision of this state; and
- (ii) Lasts 120 hours or less;

(D) Establishments engaged in the boiling, bottling, and sale of sugar cane syrup or sorghum syrup within this state, provided that such bottles contain a label listing the producer's name and street address, all added ingredients, and the net weight or volume of the product; or

(E) Nonprofit food sales and food service provided under a permit issued pursuant to Article 14 of this chapter.

(6) "Immediate container" does not include package liners.

(7) "Label" means a display of written, printed, or graphic matter upon the immediate container of any article; and a requirement made by or under the authority of this article that any word, statement, or other information appear on the label shall not be considered to be complied with unless each such word, statement, or other information also appears on the outside wrapper or container, if there is any, of the retail package of such article, or is easily legible through the outside container or wrapper.

(8) "Labeling" means all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matter upon an article or any of its containers or wrappers or accompanying such article.

(9) "Official compendium" means the official United States Pharmacopeia, official Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, official National Formulary, or any supplement to any of them.

(10) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, or association or any combination thereof.

(b) The provisions of this article regarding the selling of food shall be considered to include the manufacture, production, packaging, offer, exposure, possession, and holding of any such articles and the supplying or applying of any such articles in the conduct of any food establishment.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 2; Ga. L. 1971, p. 66, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1174, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1558, § 1; Ga. L. 2012, p. 1072, § 1/SB 300; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 1/SB 345; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(1)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted "Such term" for "This term" in the last sentence of paragraph (a)(5) and substituted "United States Pharmacopeia" for "United States Pharmacopoeia" in paragraph (a)(9).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1992, "confectioneries" was substituted for "confectionaries" in the introductory language of paragraph (a)(5).

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1996, a comma was inserted in two places in paragraph (a)(3).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Beer, wine, and distilled spirits manufactured for beverage purposes are "food" within the meaning of Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21) and establishments manufacturing such articles are subject to inspection by the Department of Agriculture for compliance with the sanitary requirements of those provisions. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-60.

State and federal alcohol labeling laws may supersede O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21. — Laws administered by the State Revenue Commissioner, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Food and Drug Administration, regarding the labeling of beer, wine, and distilled spirits may supersede certain other state statutory provisions of this title. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-60.

Label on package of meat, in order to comply with Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21), must contain

the name and place of business of the specific establishment where the food is packaged; merely placing the name of a retail food chain and the home office city on a label would not comply with those provisions. 1973 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 73-98.

Food retailers with seating facilities subject to O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21. — Food sales establishments defined in Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21(a)(5)) providing seats and other conveniences within its premises for customers to use in eating food purchased in that store shall be subject to inspection as a "food service establishment," as defined in former Code 1933, § 88-1001 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-370). 1978 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 78-65.

Provisions of Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-28) apply to bottled soft drinks. 1958-59 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 85.
35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 1 et seq. 37 Am. Jur. 2d, Fraud and Deceit, § 83.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 1, 17, 41 et seq.

ALR.

What is "food" within meaning of statute, 17 A.L.R. 1282.

Statutes or ordinances in relation to confectionery, 58 A.L.R. 293.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

26-2-22. Prohibited acts.

The following acts and the causing thereof within this state are prohibited:

- (1) The manufacture, sale or delivery, holding, storage, or offering for sale of any food that is adulterated or misbranded;
- (2) The adulteration or misbranding of any food;
- (3) The receipt in commerce of any food that is adulterated or

misbranded and the delivery or proffered delivery thereof for pay or otherwise;

(4) The sale, delivery for sale, holding for sale, or offering for sale of any article in violation of Code Section 26-2-27;

(5) The dissemination of any false advertisement;

(5.1) The failure to comply with testing, reporting, or record-keeping requirements provided by or pursuant to Code Section 26-2-27.1;

(6) The refusal to permit entry or inspection, or to permit the taking of a sample, as authorized by Code Section 26-2-36;

(7) The giving of a guaranty or undertaking, which guaranty or undertaking is false, except by a person who relied on a guaranty or undertaking to the same effect signed by, and containing the name and address of, the person residing in the State of Georgia from whom he received in good faith the food;

(8) The removal or disposal of a detained or embargoed article in violation of Code Section 26-2-38;

(9) The alteration, mutilation, destruction, obliteration, or removal of the whole or any part of the labeling of or the doing of any other act with respect to a food, if such act is done while such article is held for sale and results in such article being adulterated or misbranded;

(10) Forging, counterfeiting, simulating, or falsely representing, or without proper authority using any mark, stamp, tag, label, or other identification device authorized or required by regulations promulgated pursuant to this article; and

(11) The operation of a food sales establishment in violation of Code Section 26-2-25.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 3; Ga. L. 1971, p. 66, § 2; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 26; Ga. L. 2009, p. 441, § 1/SB 80; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(2)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Code Section 26-2-27” for “Code Section 26-2-37” in paragraph (4).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1985, a comma was deleted following “using” in paragraph (10).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

ANALYSIS

GENERAL CONSIDERATION
LEGISLATIVE INTENT

APPLICABILITY
FEDERAL JURISDICTION
INDICTMENT
STANDARDS OF CARE AND NEGLIGENCE

General Consideration

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, §§ 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2115, and 2117, and former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Pure-Food and Drug Act of 1906, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), did not change or repeal the common-law rule as stated in former Code 1933, § 105-1101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 51-1-23). *Criswell Baking Co. v. Milligan*, 77 Ga. App. 861, 50 S.E.2d 136, 1948 Ga. App. LEXIS 662 (1948) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109(7) and 42-9901).

Immunity for inspectors. — Inspectors for the consumer protection division who informed a public warehouseman that the pecans stored at its warehouse were unfit for human consumption without destroying the condemned pecans expeditiously nor notifying the holders of a security interest in the pecans of the condemnation owed no duty to the holders of the security interest under the Georgia Food Act, O.C.G.A. § 26-2-20 et seq. The injury that the holders suffered in losing their security was not the type of injury the Georgia Food Act was designed to prevent. *Planters & Citizens Bank v. Pennsylvania Millers Mut. Ins. Co.*, 786 F. Supp. 991, 1992 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2540 (S.D. Ga. 1992), *aff'd*, No. 92-8468, 1993 U.S. App. LEXIS 10340 (11th Cir. Apr. 29, 1993).

Legislative Intent

Purpose of the law against adulteration or misbranding is to protect consumers from deception or injury, and it is to be conclusively presumed that it was adopted to prevent injury to the public health by the sale and transportation in intrastate commerce of misbranded and adulterated foods. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S.

Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Applicability

No liability if substance not added to food. — Former Code 1910, § 2103 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26(1) and (2)) was not applicable when the contention is not that the defendant had adulterated the product by adding some deleterious foreign substance to the normal constituency of the product in order to sell it as a part of the product itself, but when the charge only contended that the defendant was negligent in allowing the normal ingredients of the product to become putrid and unwholesome. *Armour & Co. v. Miller*, 39 Ga. App. 228, 147 S.E. 184, 1929 Ga. App. LEXIS 271, *aff'd*, 169 Ga. 201, 149 S.E. 698, 1929 Ga. LEXIS 314 (1929) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2103).

Products made wholly from vegetable oils, water, salt, and harmless coloring matter are not prohibited from being sold by former Code 1910, § 2115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22). *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2115).

Product sometimes used as butter substitute. — Product cannot be banned merely because it is sometimes used as a substitute for creamery butter without being declared to be such. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

If it is not so misbranded as to deceive or so adulterated as to injure. — Law does not prohibit the sale of substitutes for creamery butter, provided the substitute is not sold so misbranded as to deceive or so adulterated as to injure.

Applicability (Cont'd)

Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Federal Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2117).

Indictment

Indictment sufficient. — Indictment charging that the defendant unlawfully sold “adulterated food,” in that the defendant sold to a named person “a portion of an animal, to wit, a diseased cow, unfit for food, that had died otherwise than by slaughter,” was not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure to show compliance with statutory provisions as to examination of food by or under the direction of the state chemist. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2102).

Indictment not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure to show how or in what way a portion sold was unfit for food, or was diseased, or what kind of product of the diseased cow was sold. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2102).

Standards of Care and Negligence

Plaintiff must show knowledge or negligence by food retailer. — In a suit for damages against a seller of unwholesome food which injures the plaintiff, it is still necessary to prove that the defendant either knew of the unwholesome condition of the food or was guilty of negligence in the transaction. *Criswell Baking Co. v. Milligan*, 77 Ga. App. 861, 50 S.E.2d 136,

1948 Ga. App. LEXIS 662 (1948) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-9901).

Plaintiff need only show negligence as matter of law, and not of fact. —

When before passage of the Pure-Food and Drug Act of 1906, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), an action for damages resulting from negligence could be sustained only by proof of such negligence as a matter of fact, according to the standard of ordinary prudence as applied to the circumstances, now the plaintiff may show negligence as a matter of law by establishing a breach of the statutory duty, or a plaintiff may rely on both classes of negligence, according to the facts; in other words, the Pure-Food and Drug Act of 1906, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), did not affect the nature or basis of the cause of action, but related only to the standard of care by which negligence could be determined. *Criswell Baking Co. v. Milligan*, 77 Ga. App. 861, 50 S.E.2d 136, 1948 Ga. App. LEXIS 662 (1948) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

Plaintiff can invoke section to show negligence as matter of law. —

While the Pure-Food and Drug Act of 1906, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), was designed to protect the public, and did not expressly set forth duties to individual consumers, the plaintiff as a member of the public could invoke its provisions to show negligence as a matter of law, if injured by the violation of a duty imposed by the law. *Criswell Baking Co. v. Milligan*, 77 Ga. App. 861, 50 S.E.2d 136, 1948 Ga. App. LEXIS 662 (1948) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-9901).

By showing breach of statutory duty. —

Plaintiffs, charging the defendant with a breach of legal duty in manufacturing and selling pie which they contended was unwholesome and putrid, so that they were injured and damaged by eating the food, since the enactment of the former Pure-Food and Drug Act of 1906, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), could show negligence as a matter of law by establishing a breach of the statutory duty. *Criswell*

Baking Co. v. Milligan, 77 Ga. App. 861, 50 S.E.2d 136, 1948 Ga. App. LEXIS 662 (1948) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-9901).

Sale of adulterated article which causes illness is negligence per se. — Sale of an adulterated article to a customer who is made ill by its consumption, in violation of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), constituted negligence per se. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

Such as when retailer liable for not having manufacturer's guarantee of wholesomeness. — Retail dealer who sold adulterated food, the sale of which was prohibited by the former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), who had not established a guaranty from the manufacturer as provided in former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24), that the article was not adulterated within the meaning of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), although the dealer had no knowledge of the unfit condition of the article sold and was not negligent with respect thereto, would be liable in damages to the person made sick from eating such food without fault on the plaintiff's part. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

Ordinary care is no defense, in that violation of section constitutes negligence per se. — On the trial of a suit against a dealer by a person alleged to have been made ill from eating alleged adulterated food sold by the defendant, the sale of which was made penal under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-9901 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), which was negligence per se, since the evidence authorized an inference that the food was unfit, decomposed, or putrid and was therefore unfit for human consumption

and adulterated as defined in the title, and that the plaintiff was made sick from eating the food, it was error for the court to instruct the jury that if the defendant exercised ordinary care in connection with the sale of the food the plaintiff could not recover. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

Plaintiff can establish negligence per se as matter of law, and/or negligence as matter of fact. — In a suit for damages against a seller of unwholesome food, the plaintiff may establish negligence as a matter of fact, or the plaintiff may show negligence as a matter of law by establishing a breach of a statutory duty imposed by the provisions of the pure food and drug laws, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), or plaintiff may rely on both classes of negligence. *Norris v. Pig'n Whistle Sandwich Shop, Inc.*, 79 Ga. App. 369, 53 S.E.2d 718, 1949 Ga. App. LEXIS 657 (1949) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

When dealer with manufacturer's guarantee of wholesomeness still liable for negligence as matter of fact, if not per se. — Under former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24), a dealer selling food adulterated within the meaning of that statute would not violate the statute's provisions, and therefore would not be guilty of negligence per se, if the dealer had obtained a guaranty of wholesomeness from the manufacturer but the guaranty would not relieve the dealer from the liability referred to in former Code 1933, § 105-1101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 51-1-23), if the dealer is negligent as a matter of fact in selling unwholesome food which injures another. It follows that former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24), merely creates an exception to the statute in favor of those who obtain the guaranty. *Burns v. Colonial Stores, Inc.*, 90 Ga. App. 492, 83 S.E.2d 259, 1954 Ga. App. LEXIS 741 (1954) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-115).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Candy that contains a small quantity of bourbon flavor or is bourbon flavored is adulterated. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 144.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

Preservative as adulterant within statute in relation to food, 50 A.L.R. 76.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances directed against false or fraudulent statements in advertisements, 89 A.L.R. 1004.

Constitutionality of statutes, ordinances or other regulations against adulteration of food products as applied to substances used for preservative purposes, 114 A.L.R. 1214.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

Knowledge or actual negligence on part of seller which is not an element of criminal offense under penal statute relating to sale of unfit food or other commodity, as condition of civil action in tort in which violation of the statute is relied upon as negligence per se or evidence of negligence, 128 A.L.R. 464.

Implied warranty of fitness by one serv-

ing food, 7 A.L.R.2d 1027; 87 A.L.R.4th 804; 90 A.L.R.4th 12.

Recovery for loss of business resulting from resale of unwholesome food or beverages furnished by another, 17 A.L.R.2d 1379.

Construction and application of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act § 402 (a)(3) [21 USC § 342 (a) (3)] as to food deemed "adulterated," if it is filthy or the like, or unfit for food, 45 A.L.R.2d 861.

Validity and construction of regulations dealing with misrepresentation in the sale of Kosher food, 52 A.L.R.3d 959.

Liability of packer, foodstore, or restaurant for causing trichinosis, 96 A.L.R.3d 451.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by foreign object in food or food product, 1 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by spoilage, contamination, or other deleterious condition of food or food product, 2 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by food product containing object related to, but not intended to be present in, product, 2 A.L.R.5th 189.

26-2-23. Injunctions for violations of Code Section 26-2-22.

In addition to the remedies provided for in this article, the Commissioner is authorized to apply to the superior court of the appropriate county for an injunction. Such court shall have jurisdiction, upon hearing and for cause shown, to grant a temporary or permanent injunction restraining any person from violating Code Section 26-2-22, notwithstanding the existence of an adequate remedy at law.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 52.

26-2-24. Penalty for violation of Code Section 26-2-22; exceptions.

Any person who violates Code Section 26-2-22 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, provided that:

(1) No person shall be subject to the penalties provided in this article for having violated paragraph (1) or (3) of Code Section 26-2-22 if he or she establishes a guaranty or undertaking signed by, and containing the name and address of, the person residing in this state from whom he or she received in good faith the article, to the effect that such article is not adulterated or misbranded within the meaning of this article and designating this article;

(2) No publisher, radiobroadcast licensee, or agency or medium for the dissemination of an advertisement, except the manufacturer, packer, distributor, or seller of the article to which a false advertisement relates, shall be liable under this Code section by reason of the dissemination by him or her of such false advertisement unless he or she has refused, on the request of the Commissioner, to furnish the Commissioner the name and post office address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, seller, or advertising agency who caused him or her to disseminate such advertisement; and

(3) If the removal or disposal of a detained or embargoed article creates a significant eminent threat or danger to human health, any person who violates paragraph (8) of Code Section 26-2-22 by removing or disposing of such detained or embargoed article and introducing or attempting to introduce said article into commerce for the purpose of human consumption or processing for human consumption in violation of Code Section 26-2-38 shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than two years.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 5; Ga. L. 1998, p. 189, § 1.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Dealer with manufacturer's guaranty not negligent per se but can be negligent as matter of fact. — Under former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24), relating to guaran-

ties of manufacturers, a dealer selling food which was adulterated within the meaning of the statute would not violate the statute's provisions, and therefore would not be guilty of negligence per se, if the dealer had obtained the prescribed guaranty; but the guaranty would not relieve the dealer from the liability referred to in former Code 1933, § 105-1101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 51-1-123) if the dealer was negligent as a matter of fact in

selling unwholesome food by the use of which another was injured. It follows that former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24), merely creates an exception to the statute in favor of those who obtained and established the guaranty. *Burns v. Colonial Stores, Inc.*, 90 Ga. App. 492, 83 S.E.2d 259, 1954 Ga. App. LEXIS 741 (1954) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-115).

Dealer without guaranty liable for illness, though without knowledge of food's unfitness. — Retail dealer who sold adulterated food, the sale of which was prohibited by former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), when the dealer had not established a

guaranty from the manufacturer as provided in former Code 1933, § 42-115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-24) to the effect that the article was not adulterated within the meaning of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), although the dealer had no knowledge of the unfit condition of the article sold and was not negligent with respect thereto, would be liable in damages to the person made sick from eating such food without fault on the person's part. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq. 74 Am. Jur. 2d, Telecommunications, § 195.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

Liability of packer, foodstore, or restaurant for causing trichinosis, 96 A.L.R.3d 451.

26-2-25. Licensing of food sales establishments.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a food sales establishment without having first obtained a license from the Commissioner. No license issued under this article shall be suspended or revoked except for health and sanitation reasons or violations of this article and until the licensee to be affected shall be provided with reasonable notice thereof and an opportunity for hearing, as provided under Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." Licenses issued under this article shall be renewed annually and shall not be transferable with respect to persons or location. Each food sales establishment licensed pursuant to this Code section shall post such license on the premises in an open and conspicuous manner so as to be visible to the public. Neither the state nor any county, municipality, or consolidated government shall issue or renew any business or occupation license or permit for any food sales establishment until the establishment complies with the requirements of this article.

(b) The Commissioner shall charge the following fees for the licenses issued pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section. The fee structure shall be based on the level of risk, procedural effort, and inspection time needed for each food sales establishment:

(1) Tier 5	\$300.00
(2) Tier 4	250.00
(3) Tier 3	200.00
(4) Tier 2	150.00
(5) Tier 1	100.00

(c) The Department of Agriculture shall establish rules and regulations by which to assign each food sales establishment to a proper tier and to collect the fees provided for in this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 66, § 3; Ga. L. 2002, p. 815, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-57/HB 1055.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2010, “establishment” was substituted for “establishments” at the end of the introductory language in subsection (b) and “regulations” was substituted for “regulation” in subsection (c).

Administrative rules and regulations.

Administrative rules and regulations. Compliance & Enforcement: License to Operate, Official Compilation of Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Retail Food Sales, Rule 40-7-1-.40.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Validity of statute or ordinance relating to place of sale of food, 52 A.L.R. 669.

Application of occupation, sales, or li-

cense tax to one operating dining room, cafeteria, or beverage room incidental to business, 13 A.L.R.2d 1362.

26-2-26. When food deemed adulterated.

A food shall be deemed to be adulterated if:

- (1) It bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render it injurious to health; but, in case the substance is not an added substance, such food shall not be considered adulterated under this paragraph if the quantity of such substance in such food does not ordinarily render it injurious to health;
- (2) It bears or contains any added poisonous or added deleterious substance which is unsafe within the meaning of Code Section 26-2-27. In regard to pesticide residues, a food shall be deemed to be adulterated and unsafe if it bears a pesticide residue in excess of a tolerance established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or if it bears a residue of a pesticide for which no tolerance has been established or is currently in effect for that food, if such residue appears at a level which is readily quantifiable by methods of assay for pesticide residues employed by the Commissioner on the date of the assay;

(3) It consists in whole or in part of a diseased or contaminated, filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance or if it is otherwise unfit for food;

(4) It has been produced, prepared, packed, or held under unsanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth or whereby it may have been rendered diseased, unwholesome, or injurious to health;

(5) It is the product of a diseased animal or an animal that has died otherwise than by slaughter or an animal that has been fed upon the uncooked offal from a slaughterhouse;

(6) Its container is composed in whole or in part of any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render the contents injurious to health;

(7) Any valuable constituent has been in whole or in part omitted or abstracted therefrom;

(8) Any substance has been substituted wholly or in part therefor;

(9) Damage or inferiority has been concealed in any manner;

(10) Any substance has been added thereto or mixed or packed therewith so as to increase its bulk or weight or reduce its quality or strength or make it appear better or of greater value than it is;

(11) It is confectionary and it bears or contains any alcohol or nonnutritive article or substance except harmless coloring, harmless flavoring, harmless resinous glaze not in excess of four-tenths of 1 percent, harmless natural wax not in excess of four-tenths of 1 percent, harmless natural gum, and pectin, provided that this paragraph shall not apply to any confection containing less than one-half of 1 percent by volume of alcohol derived solely from the use of flavoring extracts or to any chewing gum by reason of its containing harmless nonnutritive masticatory substances; or

(12) It bears or contains a coal-tar color other than one from a batch which has been certified under authority of the federal act.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 10; Ga. L. 1990, p. 8, § 26; Ga. L. 1990, p. 318, § 1.

Cross references.

Warranties relating to sales of goods generally, § 11-2-312 et seq.

Civil action for knowing or negligent selling of unwholesome provisions to another person by use of which damage results to purchaser or his family, § 51-1-23.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

ANALYSIS

GENERAL CONSIDERATION

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

APPLICABILITY AND DEFINITION OF ADULTERATED FOOD

JURISDICTION

INDICTMENT

STANDARDS OF NEGLIGENCE

General Consideration

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, §§ 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2115, and 2117, and former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Establishing injury. — In a negligence action by a restaurant customer who found an unwrapped condom in a salad, summary judgment was precluded by fact issues as to whether eating part of the salad was sufficient physical contact under the impact rule, and whether the customer's reaction of vomiting and becoming nauseated constituted a physical injury. *Chambley v. Apple Restaurants, Inc.*, 233 Ga. App. 498, 504 S.E.2d 551.

Legislative Intent

Purpose of the law against adulteration or misbranding is to protect consumers from deception or injury, and it is to be conclusively presumed that the law was adopted to prevent injury to the public health by the sale and transportation in intrastate commerce of misbranded and adulterated foods. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Applicability and Definition of Adulterated Food

No liability for substance not added to food. — Former Code 1910, § 2103 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26(1) and (2)), was not applicable, when the contention is not that the defendant had adulterated the product by adding some deleterious

foreign substance to the normal constituency of the product in order to sell it as part of the product itself, but if the charge only contended that the defendant was negligent in allowing the normal ingredients of the product to become putrid and unwholesome. *Armour & Co. v. Miller*, 39 Ga. App. 228, 147 S.E. 184, 1929 Ga. App. LEXIS 271, *aff'd*, 169 Ga. 201, 149 S.E. 698, 1929 Ga. LEXIS 314 (1929) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2103).

Butter substitutes. — Law does not prohibit the sale of substitutes for creamery butter, provided the substitute is not sold so misbranded as to deceive or so adulterated as to injure. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Products made wholly from vegetable oils, water, salt, and harmless coloring matter are not prohibited from being sold by former Code 1910, § 2115 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22). *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2115).

"Southern nut product," was held a "distinctive" name, not an imitation of creamery butter and not adulterated. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

Definition of "adulterated food". — Food was adulterated, within the meaning of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26) if it contained something "foreign" or "added," or if the

Applicability and Definition of Adulterated Food (Cont'd)

object was a "portion of an animal unfit for food." *Davison-Paxon Co. v. Archer*, 91 Ga. App. 131, 85 S.E.2d 182, 1954 Ga. App. LEXIS 880 (1954) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

Includes decomposed food. — Any portion of an animal, such as pig's liver, which is decomposed or putrid, is adulterated and unfit for food. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109 and 42-9906).

Bone not "portion unfit for food". — Barbecued pork sandwich, which contained a small piece of bone which the plaintiff got caught in the plaintiff's throat, contained nothing that would render it unfit for food within the provisions of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26) as containing a "portion of animal unfit for food," and the defendant could not be charged with negligence per se in the violation of the former provisions so as to require the submission of the case to a jury. *Norris v. Pig'n Whistle Sandwich Shop, Inc.*, 79 Ga. App. 369, 53 S.E.2d 718, 1949 Ga. App. LEXIS 657 (1949) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2117).

Indictment

Indictment sufficient. — Indictment charging that the defendant unlawfully sold "adulterated food," in that defendant sold to a named person "a portion of an animal, to wit, a diseased cow, unfit for food, that had died otherwise than by slaughter," was not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure

to show compliance with statutory provisions as to examination of food by or under the direction of the state chemist. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2102).

Indictment not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure to show how or in what way the portion sold was unfit for food, or was diseased, or what kind of product of the diseased cow was sold. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2102).

Standards of Negligence

Sale of adulterated food which causes illness is negligence per se. — Sale of an adulterated article to a customer who was made ill by the article's consumption, in violation of former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-24 and 26-2-26), constituted negligence per se. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

Judge must instruct jury that putrid food causing illness is negligence per se. — In a suit against a dealer by a person alleged to have been made ill from eating alleged adulterated food sold by the defendant, the sale of which was penal under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-24 and 26-2-26), which was negligence per se when the evidence authorized an inference that the food was decomposed or putrid and was therefore unfit for human consumption and adulterated as defined in the act, and that the plaintiff was made sick from eating the food, it was error for the court to instruct the jury that if the defendant exercised ordinary care in the sale of the food the plaintiff could not recover. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906).

Plaintiff can establish negligence per se as matter of law, and/or negligence as matter of fact. — In a suit for

damages against a seller of unwholesome food, the plaintiff may establish negligence as a matter of fact, or the plaintiff may show negligence as a matter of law by establishing a breach of a statutory duty imposed by the provisions of the pure food and drug laws, former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), or plaintiff may rely on both classes of negligence. *Norris v. Pig'n Whistle Sandwich Shop, Inc.*, 79 Ga. App. 369, 53 S.E.2d 718, 1949 Ga. App. LEXIS 657 (1949) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

Evidence that plaintiff was made sick by adulterated food sufficient for recovery. — In a suit against a retailer of meats, when the plaintiff alleges that the defendant sold some pig's liver which on the same day was cooked and eaten by the plaintiff's family all of whom became ill on the following morning, that when it was sold the liver was decomposed and unwholesome, contaminated by infectious

matter, and unfit for food, that it poisoned the plaintiff, that the defendant was negligent in not inspecting the liver in holding it out as fresh and wholesome when it was not fit for human use, in not warning the plaintiff of the unwholesome condition and in selling the liver for human consumption in the unwholesome condition described, "which was a violation of state law," the petition was sufficient for recovery for a violation by the defendant of the statutory duty resting upon defendant, as contained in the provision of former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, 42-9901, and 42-9906 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-24 and 26-2-26), making it a violation of law for the defendant to sell an article of food in the unwholesome and deleterious condition described. *Donaldson v. Great Atl. & Pac. Tea Co.*, 59 Ga. App. 79, 200 S.E. 498, 1938 Ga. App. LEXIS 450 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, §§ 42-109, 42-115, and 42-9901).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Candy that contains a small quantity of bourbon flavor or is bourbon flavored is adulterated. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 144.

Fiber separators between layers of apples must be sterilized. — Former Code 1933, § 2103 (see now O.C.G.A. §

26-2-26(1) and (2)) was sufficient to prohibit the reuse of fiber separators between layers of apples unless adequate provisions had been made to sterilize or otherwise render the separators suitable for use. 1960-61 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 18, 20, 39.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 23.

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

Preservative as adulterant within statute in relation to food, 50 A.L.R. 76.

Statutes or ordinances in relation to confectionery, 58 A.L.R. 293.

Constitutionality of statutes, ordinances or other regulations against adulteration of food products as applied to substances used for preservative purposes, 114 A.L.R. 1214.

Infected or tainted condition of milk or other food, or contamination in water, and

its causation of the sickness of the consumer, as inferable from such sickness, 130 A.L.R. 616.

Liability of manufacturer or packer of defective article for injury to person or property of ultimate consumer who purchased from middleman, 140 A.L.R. 191; 142 A.L.R. 1490.

Implied warranty of fitness by one serving food, 7 A.L.R.2d 1027; 87 A.L.R.4th 804; 90 A.L.R.4th 12.

Construction and application of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act § 402 (a)(3) [21 USC § 342 (a) (3)] as to food deemed "adulterated," if it is filthy or the like, or unfit for food, 45 A.L.R.2d 861.

Coloring matter as forbidden adulteration of food, 56 A.L.R.2d 1129.

Liability for injury or death allegedly

caused by foreign object in food or food product, 1 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by spoilage, contamination, or other deleterious condition of food or food product, 2 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by food product containing object related to, but not intended to be present in, product, 2 A.L.R.5th 189.

26-2-27. Poisonous or deleterious substances in food; exception for required substances.

(a) Any poisonous or deleterious substance added to any food, except where such substance is required in the production thereof or cannot be avoided by good manufacturing practice, shall be deemed to be unsafe for purposes of the application of paragraph (2) of Code Section 26-2-26.

(b) When a poisonous or deleterious substance is required in the production of food or cannot be avoided by good manufacturing process, the Commissioner shall promulgate regulations limiting the quantity therein or thereon to such extent as the Commissioner finds necessary for the protection of public health; and any quantity exceeding the limits so fixed shall also be deemed to be unsafe for purposes of the application of paragraph (2) of Code Section 26-2-26. While such a regulation is in effect limiting the quantity of any such substance in the case of any food, such food shall not, by reason of bearing or containing any added amount of such substance, be considered to be adulterated within the meaning of paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-2-26.

(c) In determining the quantity of added poisonous or deleterious substances to be tolerated in or on different articles of food, the Commissioner shall take into account the extent to which the use of such substance is required or cannot be avoided in the production of each such article and the other ways in which the consumer may be affected by the same or other poisonous or deleterious substances.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 13.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1910, § 2103 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Manufacturer not liable under section if substance not added. — Former Code 1910, § 2103 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26(1) and (2)) was not applicable when the contention was not that the

defendant had adulterated the product by adding some deleterious foreign substance to the normal constituency of the product in order to sell it as a part of the product itself, but when the charge only contended that the defendant was negligent in allowing the normal ingredients of the product to become putrid and unwholesome. *Armour & Co. v. Miller*, 39 Ga. App. 228, 147 S.E. 184, 1929 Ga. App.

LEXIS 271, aff'd, 169 Ga. 201, 149 S.E. 698, 1929 Ga. LEXIS 314 (1929) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2103).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 20.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 23.

ALR.

Preservative as adulterant within statute in relation of food, 50 A.L.R. 76.

Statutory provisions relating to purity of food products as applicable to foreign substances which get into product as result of accident or negligence, and not by purpose or design, 98 A.L.R. 1496.

Constitutionality of statutes, ordinances or other regulations against adulteration of food products as applied to substances used for preservative purposes, 114 A.L.R. 1214.

Liability of manufacturer or packer of defective article for injury to person or property of ultimate consumer who purchased from middleman, 140 A.L.R. 191; 142 A.L.R. 1490.

26-2-27.1. Testing of specimens from food processing centers; consistency in standards; cost; retention of records from testing; exemption.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “food processing plant” means a commercial operation that manufactures food for human consumption and does not provide food directly to a consumer from that location. Such term shall not include a commercial operation that produces raw agricultural commodities and whose end product remains a raw agricultural product.

(b)(1)(A) In order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare and ensure compliance with this article, the Commissioner shall by rule or regulation establish requirements for regular testing of samples or specimens of foods and ingredients by food processing plants for the presence of poisonous or deleterious substances or other contaminants rendering such foods or ingredients injurious to health. Such rules or regulations shall identify the specific classes or types of food processing plants, foods, ingredients, and poisonous or deleterious substances or other contaminants that shall be subject to such testing requirements and the frequency with which such tests shall be performed by food processing plants.

(B) The Commissioner shall also promulgate rules and regulations establishing minimum standards and requirements for a written food safety plan, such as a hazard analysis critical control point plan, that may be submitted by an operator of a food processing plant to document and describe the procedures used at such plant to prevent the presence of hazards such as poisonous or deleterious substances or other contaminants that would render finished foods or finished ingredients as manufactured at

such plant injurious to health, including preventive controls, monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of such controls, and records of corrective actions, including actions taken in response to the presence of known hazards. If an operator of a food processing plant, in its discretion, submits to the department a written food safety plan for such plant and such plan conforms to rules and regulations promulgated for purposes of this subparagraph, then such food processing plant shall comply with the requirements of such written food safety plan, including, but not limited to, any test regimen provided by such plan, in lieu of complying with a test regimen established by rules or regulations promulgated by the Commissioner pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph.

(C)(i) The Commissioner shall impose a civil penalty for a violation of this subsection.

(ii) The department shall adopt rules and regulations establishing a schedule of civil penalties that shall be imposed under this subsection. Civil penalties imposed pursuant to this subsection shall not exceed \$5,000.00 for each violation; provided, however, that a food processing plant that knowingly fails to comply with the provisions of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph shall be punished by the imposition of a \$7,500.00 civil penalty. In addition to such civil penalty, within 30 days of the determination by the Commissioner that such violation has occurred, such food processing plant shall submit to the Commissioner a written plan pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.

(iii) For purposes of this subsection, each day a violation continues after the period established for compliance by the Commissioner shall be considered a separate violation.

(iv) When a civil penalty is imposed under this subsection, such penalty shall be subject to review in the manner prescribed by Article 1 of Chapter 13 of Title 50, known as the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."

(2) In addition to any regular tests required pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Commissioner may order any food processing plant to have samples or specimens of its foods and ingredients tested for the presence of any poisonous or deleterious substances or other contaminants whenever in his or her determination there are reasonable grounds to suspect that such foods or ingredients may be injurious to health.

(c) Any food processing plant subject to any testing requirements pursuant to this Code section shall cause such required tests to be performed in accordance with testing standards and procedures estab-

lished by rules and regulations of the Commissioner. Testing standards and procedures established by the Commissioner under this paragraph shall be consistent with standards presented in the federal Food and Drug Administration's Bacterial Analytical Manual and standards developed by the Association of Analytical Communities International, International Organization for Standardization, or another internationally recognized certification body.

(d) A food processing plant shall be responsible for the cost of any testing required pursuant to this Code section and may conduct such testing either internally or via a third party, provided that subsection (c) of this Code section applies in either case.

(e)(1) Whenever any person or firm that operates a food processing plant in this state obtains information from testing of samples or specimens of finished foods or finished food ingredients as manufactured at such food processing plant which, based on a confirmed positive test result, indicates the presence of a substance that would cause a manufactured food bearing or containing the same to be adulterated within the meaning of paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-2-26, such person or firm shall report such test result to the department within 24 hours after obtaining such information.

(2) Any person who knowingly fails to make the report required by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. The punishment provided for in this subsection shall be supplemental to any other applicable provisions of law.

(f) Records of the results of any tests required pursuant to this Code section shall be kept by a food processing plant and made available to the department for inspection for a period of not less than two years from the date the results were reported by the laboratory. Any person who knowingly violates this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. The punishment provided for in this subsection shall be supplemental to any other applicable provisions of law.

(g) This Code section shall not apply to any food processing plant operating under a federal grant of inspection from the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service.

(h) Any person who knowingly introduces into commerce finished foods or finished food ingredients as manufactured at a food processing plant knowing that it contains a substance that would cause a manufactured food bearing or containing the same to be adulterated within the meaning of paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-2-26 shall be guilty of a felony, and, upon conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than 20 years, a fine not to exceed \$20,000.00, or both. The punishment provided for in this subsection shall be supplemental to any other applicable provisions of law.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-27.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2009, p. 441, § 2/SB 80; Ga. L. 2010, p. 465, §§ 2, 3, 4/HB 883.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2010, p. 465, § 1/HB 883, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: "This Act shall be known and may

be cited as the 'Sanitary Activity for Food-processing Enterprises (SAFE) Act.'"

Administrative rules and regulations.

Manufactured Food Regulations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-18-.01 et seq.

26-2-28. When food deemed misbranded.

A food shall be deemed to be misbranded if:

- (1) Its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;
- (2) It is offered for sale under the name of another food;
- (3) It is an imitation of another food for which a definition and standard of identity have been prescribed by regulations as provided by Code Section 26-2-35; or if it is an imitation of another food that is not subject to paragraph (7) of this Code section, unless its label bears, in type of uniform size and prominence, the word "imitation" and, immediately thereafter, the name of the food imitated;
- (4) Its container is so made, formed, or filled as to be misleading;
- (5)(A) In package form, unless it bears a label containing:
 - (i) The name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor; and
 - (ii) An accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count.

However, under division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, reasonable variations shall be permitted, and exemptions as to small packages shall be established by regulations prescribed by the Commissioner; and a food shall not be deemed misbranded because of omission of the information required by division (i) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph where such omission is authorized in writing by the Commissioner.

(B) The Commissioner may authorize the omission from the label of packaged food of the name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor upon a showing of undue hardship because of the size of the package, the material of which the package is made, or the disproportionate cost of compliance. Before authorizing such omission, the Commissioner shall require the filing of a certificate of territorial responsibility in a form prescribed by him. Failure to maintain on file with the Commissioner a correct current statement of territorial responsibility in accordance with the Commissioner's requirements shall terminate any such authorization previously granted;

(6) Any word, statement, or other information required by or under authority of this article to appear on the label or labeling is not prominently placed thereon with such conspicuousness, as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices in the labeling, and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use;

(7) It purports to be or is represented as a food for which a definition and standard of identity has been prescribed by regulations as provided by Code Section 26-2-35, unless:

(A) It conforms to such definition and standard; and

(B) Its label bears the name of the food specified in the definition and standard and, insofar as may be required by such regulations, the common names of optional ingredients, other than spices, flavoring, and coloring, present in such food;

(8) It purports to be or is represented as:

(A) A food for which a standard of quality has been prescribed by regulations as provided by Code Section 26-2-35 and its quality falls below such standard, unless its label bears, in such manner and form as such regulations specify, a statement that it falls below such standard; or

(B) A food for which a standard or standards of fill of container have been prescribed by regulation as provided by Code Section 26-2-35, and it falls below the standard of fill of container applicable thereto, unless its label bears, in such manner and form as such regulations specify, a statement that it falls below such standard;

(9)(A) It is not subject to paragraph (7) of this Code section, unless it bears labeling clearly giving:

(i) The common or usual name of the food, if any such name exists; and

(ii) In case it is fabricated from two or more ingredients, the common or usual name of each such ingredient; except that spices, flavorings, and colorings, other than those sold as such, may be designated as spices, flavorings, and colorings without naming each;

(B) To the extent that compliance with the requirements of division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph is impractical or results in deception or unfair competition, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the Commissioner;

(C) The requirements of division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall not apply to any carbonated beverage, the

ingredients of which have been fully and correctly disclosed, to the extent prescribed by division (ii) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, to the Commissioner in an affidavit;

(10) It purports to be or is represented for special dietary uses, unless its label bears such information concerning its vitamin, mineral, and other dietary properties as the Commissioner determines to be, and by regulations prescribes, as necessary in order fully to inform purchasers as to its value for such uses;

(11) It bears or contains any artificial flavoring, artificial coloring, or chemical preservative, unless it bears labeling stating that fact, provided that, to the extent that compliance with the requirements of this paragraph is impracticable, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the Commissioner; or

(12) It is a product intended as an ingredient of another food and when used according to the directions of the purveyor will result in the final food product being adulterated or misbranded.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 11; Ga. L. 1966, p. 180, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26.

Law reviews.

For comment on Aeration Processes v. Commissioner, 194 N.E.2d 838 (Mass.

1963), and *Coffee-Rich v. Kansas State Bd. of Health*, 192 Kan. 431, 388 P.2d 582 (1964), discussing imitation foods and misbranding statutes, see 13 J. Pub. L. 536 (1964).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

ANALYSIS

GENERAL CONSIDERATION

JURISDICTION

APPLICABILITY

General Consideration

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, §§ 2101, 2104, 2115, and 2117, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Purpose of the law against adulteration or misbranding is to protect consumers from deception or injury, and it is to be conclusively presumed that it was adopted to prevent injury to the public health by the sale and transportation in intrastate commerce of misbranded and adulterated foods. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695

(5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2103 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26(1) and (2)), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2117).

Applicability

Word "imitation" as used in former Code 1910, § 2104 indicated some-

thing intentional rather than incidental, and imported more than mere resemblance or similitude. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

Distinctive name not imitation. — “Southern nut product” held a “distinctive” name, not an imitation of creamery butter and not adulterated. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

Product sometimes used as a substitute for creamery butter without being declared to be such was not banned. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

Products made wholly from vegetable oils, water, salt, and harmless coloring matter are not prohibited from being sold by former Code 1910, § 2115

(see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22). *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2115).

Substitute must not be sold so misbranded as to deceive or so adulterated as to injure. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Former Code 1910, § 2101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22) did not prohibit the use of adulterated or misbranded foods. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Former Code 1910, § 2104 dealt with articles sold in commerce. *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2104).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Provisions of Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-28) apply to bottled soft drinks. 1958-59 Ga. Op. Att’y Gen. 7.

Label on a package of meat, in order to comply with Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-28), must

contain the name and place of business of the specific establishment where the food is packaged; merely placing the name of a retail food chain and the home office city on a label would not comply with these provisions. 1973 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 73-98.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 24 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 21, 38 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes requiring notice by label or otherwise, of the fact that product is imported, or as to the place

of production, 83 A.L.R. 1409; 124 A.L.R. 572.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug or cosmetic products as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

26-2-29. Misleading advertisements; certain practices declared misleading.

(a) An advertisement of a food shall be deemed to be false if it is misleading in any particular.

(b) By way of illustration only and without limiting the scope of subsection (a) of this Code section, the following practices employed in the advertisement of a food are declared to be misleading:

(1) Causing actual confusion or actual misunderstanding as to the source, sponsorship, approval, or certification of food;

(2) Using deceptive representations or designations of geographic origin in connection with food;

(3) Representing that food has sponsorship, approval, characteristics, ingredients, uses, benefits, or quantities that it does not have or that a person has a sponsorship, approval, status, affiliation, or connection that he does not have;

(4) Representing that food is of a particular standard, quality, or grade if it is not; or

(5) Making false or misleading statements concerning the food of another.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 14; Ga. L. 1989, p. 260, § 1.

Cross references.

False advertising generally, § 10-1-420 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 85.
37 Am. Jur. 2d, Fraud and Deceit, § 83.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq. 37 C.J.S., Fraud, § 23 et seq.

ALR.

Validity and construction of regulations dealing with misrepresentation in the sale of Kosher food, 52 A.L.R.3d 959.

26-2-30. Factors to be taken into account in determining whether labels or advertisements are misleading.

If an article is alleged to be misbranded because the labeling is misleading or if an advertisement is alleged to be false because it is misleading, then, in determining whether the labeling or advertisement is misleading, there shall be taken into account, among other things, not only representations made or suggested by statements, words, designs, devices, sound, or any combination thereof, but also the extent to which the labeling or advertisement fails to reveal facts material in the light of such representations or material with respect to consequences which may result from the use of the article to which the

labeling or advertisement relates under the conditions of use prescribed in the labeling or advertisement thereof or under such conditions of use as are customary or usual.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 2.

Cross references.

False advertising generally, § 10-1-420
et seq.

26-2-30.1. Beef produced without antibiotics or growth hormones; “Georgia lean” beef.

(a) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to promulgate and adopt rules and regulations for the labeling of beef and for the purpose of certifying beef as having been produced without feeding, injecting, or implanting antibiotics or growth hormones in the animal from which such beef was produced.

(b) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to promulgate and adopt rules and regulations and to establish standards for the labeling and certification of beef as “Georgia lean.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-30.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1986, p. 1089, § 1.

26-2-31. [Reserved] Repacking of flour, grits, hominy, and cornmeal; exceptions.

History.

Ga. L. 1889, p. 170, § 1; Ga. L. 1890-91, p. 236, § 1; Civil Code 1895, § 1622; Penal Code 1895, §§ 550, 551; Civil Code 1910, § 1865; Penal Code 1910, §§ 562, 563; Code 1933, §§ 42-318, 42-9902; Ga.

L. 1958, p. 652, § 1; repealed by Ga. L. 1999, p. 642, § 1, effective July 1, 1999.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1999, p. 642, § 1 repealed and reserved this Code section, effective July 1, 1999.

26-2-32. Honey and imitation honey labels.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to package any product and label the product as “honey” or “imitation honey,” or to use the word “honey” in any prominent location on the label of such product, or to sell or offer for sale any product which is labeled “honey” or “imitation honey” or which contains a label with the word “honey” prominently displayed thereon, unless such product is pure honey manufactured by honeybees.

(b) Any person who violates any provisions of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be

punished by a fine of not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$1,000.00 or by confinement for a total term not to exceed 12 months, or both.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 450, § 1; Ga. L. 1990, p. 391, § 1.

Cross references.

Regulation of honeybees by Commissioner, § 2-14-40 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fingerprinting not required for violation of O.C.G.A. § 26-2-32. — Violation of O.C.G.A. § 26-2-32 is not, at this time, designated as an offense for which

those charged with a violation are to be fingerprinted. 1990 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 90-22.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes requiring notice by label or otherwise, of the fact that product is imported, or as to the place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or

cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

26-2-33. Enforcement of article by Commissioner; employment of personnel.

(a) The Commissioner is charged with the duty of enforcing this article and rules, regulations, and standards adopted and promulgated under this article in establishments that have the majority of square footage of building floor space used for the operation of food sales as defined in Code Section 26-2-21. The measurement of square footage shall consider indoor and outdoor dining areas as part of food service as defined in Code Section 26-2-370. The Commissioner shall employ the necessary personnel and shall fix their compensation and prescribe their duties. Duly authorized representatives are authorized to enter upon and inspect the premises of any food sales establishment.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, food service establishments as defined in Code Section 26-2-370 shall be inspected and regulated under Article 13 of this chapter and shall not be subject to inspection or enforcement under this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 15; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1558, § 2.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Immunity for inspectors. — Inspectors for the consumer protection division

who informed a public warehouseman that the pecans stored at its warehouse

were unfit for human consumption without destroying the condemned pecans expeditiously nor notifying the holders of a security interest in the pecans of the condemnation owed no duty to the holders of the security interest under the Georgia Food Act, O.C.G.A. § 26-2-20 et seq. The injury that the holders suffered in losing

their security was not the type of injury the Georgia Food Act was designed to prevent. *Planters & Citizens Bank v. Pennsylvania Millers Mut. Ins. Co.*, 786 F. Supp. 991, 1992 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 2540 (S.D. Ga. 1992), *aff'd*, No. 92-8468, 1993 U.S. App. LEXIS 10340 (11th Cir. Apr. 29, 1993).

26-2-34. Promulgation of regulations; notice and hearing for proposed amendments; variances or waivers.

(a) The authority to promulgate regulations for the efficient enforcement of this article is vested in the Commissioner. The Commissioner is authorized to make the regulations promulgated under this article conform, insofar as practicable, with those promulgated under the federal act.

(b) Hearings authorized or required by this article shall be conducted by the Commissioner or such officer, agent, or employee as the Commissioner may designate for the purpose.

(c) Before promulgating any regulation authorized by Code Sections 26-2-35 and 26-2-37 and paragraph (10) of Code Section 26-2-28, the Commissioner shall give appropriate notice of the proposal and of the time and place for a hearing. The regulation so promulgated shall become effective on a date fixed by the Commissioner, which date shall not be prior to 30 days after its promulgation. Such regulation may be amended or repealed in the same manner as is provided for its adoption, except that, in the case of a regulation amending or repealing any such regulation, the Commissioner, to such an extent as is deemed necessary, in order to prevent undue hardship, may disregard the foregoing provisions regarding notices, hearing, or effective date.

(d)(1) For purposes of this subsection, the term:

(A) "Substantial hardship" means a significant, unique, and demonstrable economic, technological, legal, or other type of hardship to the person requesting a variance or waiver which impairs the ability of the person to continue to function in the regulated practice or business.

(B) "Variance" means a decision by an agency to grant a modification to all or part of the literal requirements of a rule to a person who is subject to the rule.

(C) "Waiver" means a decision by an agency not to apply all or part of a rule to a person who is subject to the rule.

(2) The Commissioner may grant a variance or waiver to any rule promulgated pursuant to this Code section when a person subject to

such rule demonstrates that the purpose of the underlying statute upon which the rule is based can be or has been achieved by other specific means which are agreeable to the person seeking the variance or waiver and that strict application of the rule would create a substantial hardship to such person.

(3) This subsection shall not apply, and no variance or waiver shall be sought or authorized, if the granting of such variance or waiver would be harmful to the public health, safety, or welfare.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 15; Ga. L. 2017, p. 619, § 1/SB 78.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Food Division Regulations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Depart-

ment of Agriculture, Rule 40-7-1-.01 et seq.

Cottage Food Regulations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-19-.01 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

State cannot prohibit sale of food merely because it resembles existing product. — Neither the commissioner nor the Department of Agriculture has authority to promulgate a rule absolutely prohibiting the sale of a harmless and

nutritious food product merely because it resembles another product already on the market. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 3.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 5.

26-2-34.1. Confidential information.

The following information, records, and data obtained by the Department of Agriculture from the federal Food and Drug Administration pursuant to a contract or commissioning agreement shall be deemed confidential and shall not be open to inspection by the public, to the extent that it was obtained or furnished on a confidential basis or is exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, the federal Freedom of Information Act: trade secrets; confidential commercial information; information under the federal deliberative process privilege; information compiled for law enforcement purposes; or information expressly required to be kept confidential by other federal laws.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-34.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2020, p. 486, § 1/SB 381.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective January 1, 2021.

26-2-35. Food regulations.

(a) Whenever in the judgment of the Commissioner such action will promote honesty and fair dealing in the interest of the consumers, the Commissioner shall promulgate regulations fixing and establishing for any food or any class of food a reasonable definition and standard of identity and, if applicable, a reasonable standard of quality and fill of container.

(b) In prescribing a definition and a standard of identity for any food or class of food in which optional ingredients are permitted, the Commissioner shall, for the purpose of promoting honesty and fair dealing in the interest of consumers, designate the optional ingredients which shall be named on the label. The definitions and standards so promulgated shall conform so far as practicable to the definitions and standards promulgated under authority of the federal act.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 9.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules of the Georgia Department of

Agriculture, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rule 40-1-1-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 23 et seq. 63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 460.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 3, 4, 14. 73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 208 et seq.

26-2-36. Right of access to food establishments and transport vehicles.

(a) The Commissioner or his duly authorized agent shall have free access during all hours of operation and at all other reasonable hours to any factory, warehouse, or establishment in which food is manufactured, processed, packed, or held for introduction into commerce and any vehicle being used to transport or hold such foods to commerce for the purposes:

(1) Of inspecting such factory, warehouse, establishment, or vehicle, any records of pathogen destruction, and any records of testing of samples or specimens of foods or ingredients for the presence of poisonous or deleterious substances or other contaminants and the results thereof as may be required pursuant to Code Section 26-2-27.1, to determine if any of the provisions of this article are being violated; and

(2) Of securing samples or specimens of any food, after paying or offering to pay for such sample.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Commissioner to make or cause to be made examinations of samples secured under subsection (a) of this Code section to determine whether or not this article is being violated.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 16; Ga. L. 2009, p. 441, § 3/SB 80.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 12.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 20.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application

of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

26-2-37. Temporary permits.

(a) Whenever the Commissioner finds, after investigation, that the distribution in Georgia of any class of food may, by reason of contamination with microorganisms during manufacture, processing, or packing thereof in any locality, be injurious to health and that such injurious nature cannot be adequately determined after such articles have entered commerce, he then, and in such case only, shall promulgate regulations providing for the issuance to manufacturers, processors, or packers of such class of food in such locality of permits to which shall be attached such conditions governing the manufacture, processing, or packing of such class of food, for such temporary period of time, as may be necessary to protect the public health; and, after the effective date of such regulations and during such temporary period, no person shall introduce or deliver for introduction into commerce any such food manufactured, processed, or packed by any such manufacturer, processor, or packer unless such manufacturer, processor, or packer holds a permit issued by the Commissioner as provided by such regulations.

(b) The Commissioner is authorized to suspend immediately upon notice any permit issued under authority of this Code section if it is found that any of the conditions of the permit have been violated. The holder of a permit so suspended shall be privileged at any time to apply for the reinstatement of such permit. The Commissioner shall, immediately after prompt hearing and inspection of the establishment, reinstate such permit if it is found that adequate measures have been taken to comply with and maintain the conditions of the permit as originally issued or as amended.

(c) Any officer or employee duly designated by the Commissioner shall have access to any factory or establishment, the operator of which holds a permit from the Department of Agriculture, for the purpose of

ascertaining whether or not the conditions of the permit are being complied with. Denial of access for such inspection shall be grounds for suspension of the permit until such access is freely given by the owner or operator.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 12.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by spoilage, contamination, or

other deleterious condition of food or food product, 2 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by food product containing object related to, but not intended to be present in, product, 2 A.L.R.5th 189.

26-2-38. Detention or embargo of adulterated or misbranded food.

(a) Whenever a duly authorized agent of the Commissioner finds or has probable cause to believe that any food is adulterated or misbranded within the meaning of this article, such agent shall affix to such article or to any container, field, building, or structure which contains such article a tag or other appropriate marking, giving notice that such article is, or is suspected of being, adulterated or misbranded and has been detained or embargoed and warning all persons not to remove or dispose of such article by sale or otherwise until permission for removal or disposal is given by the agent or the court. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or dispose of such detained or embargoed article by sale or otherwise without permission of the Commissioner. Upon application, the Commissioner shall grant permission to move or dispose of such article to a safe and secure area and in a safe and secure manner.

(b) When an article detained or embargoed under subsection (a) of this Code section has been found by such agent to be adulterated or misbranded, he shall bring an action for condemnation of such article in the superior court of the county where the article is detained or embargoed. When such agent has found that an article so detained or embargoed is not adulterated or misbranded, he shall remove the tags or other markings.

(c) If the court finds that a detained or embargoed article is adulterated or misbranded, such article shall, after entry of the decree, be destroyed at the expense of the claimant thereof under the supervision of the Commissioner and all court costs and fees, and storage and other proper expenses shall be taxed against the claimant of such article or his agent, provided that, when the adulteration or misbranding can be

corrected by proper labeling or processing of the article, the court, after entry of the decree and after such costs, fees, and expenses have been paid and a good and sufficient bond conditioned that such article shall be so labeled or processed, has been executed, may by proper order direct that such article be delivered to the claimant thereof for such labeling or processing under the supervision of an agent of the Commissioner. The expense of such supervision shall be paid by the claimant. Such shall be returned to the claimant of the article on representation to the court by the Commissioner that the article is no longer in violation of this article and that the expense of such supervision has been paid.

(d) Whenever the Commissioner or any of his authorized agents shall find in any room, building, vehicle for transportation, or other structure any meat, seafood, poultry, vegetables, fruit, or other perishable articles which are unsound, which contain any filthy, decomposed, or putrid substances, or which might be poisonous or deleterious to health or otherwise unsafe, the same shall be declared to be a nuisance and the Commissioner or his authorized agent shall immediately condemn or destroy or in any other manner render the same unsalable as human food.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 6; Ga. L. 1986, p. 197, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 189, § 2.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, § 2117 and former Code 1933, § 42-109, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Definition of adulterated food. — Food is adulterated, within the meaning of former Code 1933, § 42-109 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-26), if it contains something "foreign" or "added," or it must appear that the object is a "portion of an animal unfit for food." *Davison-Paxon Co. v. Archer*, 91 Ga. App. 131, 85 S.E.2d 182,

1954 Ga. App. LEXIS 880 (1954) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-109).

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2117).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Right of Department of Agriculture to embargo and destroy adulterated food. — Department of Agriculture inspectors are authorized to detain, to embargo, and under certain circumstances,

to destroy adulterated food in the possession of any food establishment including pecans on display. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U70-22.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 58.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 23, 52, 59 et seq.

ALR.

Provisions of statutes against mis-

branding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

26-2-39. Publication of reports and dissemination of information in the interest of public health and consumer protection.

(a) The Commissioner may cause to be published from time to time reports summarizing all judgments, decrees, and court orders which have been rendered under this article, including the nature of the charge and the disposition thereof.

(b) The Commissioner may also cause to be disseminated such information regarding food as the Commissioner deems necessary in the interest of public health and the protection of the consumer against fraud.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prohibit the Commissioner from collecting, reporting, and illustrating the results of the investigations of the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 17.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of manufacturer or seller for injury caused by food or food product sold, 77 A.L.R.2d 7.

Liability of packer, foodstore, or restaurant for causing trichinosis, 96 A.L.R.3d 451.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by foreign object in food or food product, 1 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by spoilage, contamination, or other deleterious condition of food or food product, 2 A.L.R.5th 1.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by food product containing object related to, but not intended to be present in, product, 2 A.L.R.5th 189.

26-2-40. Written notice or warning sufficient for minor violations of article.

Nothing in this article shall be construed as requiring the Commissioner to report, for the institution of proceedings under this article, minor violations of this article whenever the Commissioner believes that the public interest will be adequately served in the circumstances by a suitable written notice or warning.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 41.

26-2-41. Prosecution of violations; notice to defendant prior to institution of criminal proceeding.

It shall be the duty of each prosecuting attorney to whom the Commissioner reports any violation of this article to cause appropriate proceedings to be instituted in the appropriate court without delay and to prosecute the same in the manner provided by law. Before any violation of this article is reported to any prosecuting attorney for the institution of a criminal proceeding, the person against whom such proceeding is contemplated shall be given appropriate notice and an opportunity to present his views before the Commissioner or his designated agent orally or in writing, in person, or by attorney, with regard to such contemplated proceedings.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 7.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1910, § 2101, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Jurisdiction of federal court to enjoin wrongful confiscation of food products and prosecutions for violating former Code 1910, § 2101 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-22), see *Baltimore Butterine Co. v. Talmadge*, 32 F.2d 904, 1929 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 1244 (D. Ga. 1929), *aff'd*, 37 F.2d 1014, 1930 U.S. App. LEXIS 2695 (5th Cir. 1930) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Indictment sufficient. — Indictment charging that the defendant unlawfully sold "adulterated food," in that defendant sold to a named person "a portion of an

animal, to wit, a diseased cow, unfit for food, that had died otherwise than by slaughter," was not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure to show compliance with statutory provisions as to examination of food by or under the direction of the state chemist. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

Indictment not subject to demurrer (now motion to dismiss) because of failure to show how or in what way the portion sold was unfit for food, or was diseased, or what kind of product of the diseased cow was sold. *Evitt v. State*, 23 Ga. App. 532, 98 S.E. 737, 1919 Ga. App. LEXIS 186 (1919) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2101).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 63 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 49 et seq.

ARTICLE 3
MEAT INSPECTION

Cross references.

Disposal of diseased, disabled, or dead animals generally, § 4-5-1 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

26-2-60. Short title.

This article may be cited as the “Georgia Meat Inspection Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 33.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Meat Inspection - Meat Processing, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regu-

lations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry Inspection, Rule 40-10-1-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 31, 32.

26-2-61. Legislative intent.

Meat and meat food products are an important source of the nation’s total supply of food. It is essential to the public interest that the health and welfare of consumers be protected by assuring that meat and meat food products distributed to them are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled, and packaged. Unwholesome, adulterated, or misbranded meat or meat food products are injurious to the public welfare, destroy markets for wholesome, not adulterated, and properly labeled and packaged meat and meat food products, and result in sundry losses to livestock producers and processors of meat and meat food products as well as injury to consumers. The unwholesome, adulterated, mislabeled, or deceptively packaged articles can be sold at lower prices and compete unfairly with the wholesome, not adulterated, and properly labeled and packaged articles, to the detriment of consumers and the public generally. It is hereby found that regulation by the Commissioner and cooperation by this state and the United States as contemplated by this article are appropriate to the health and

welfare of consumers and otherwise effectuate the purposes of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 2.

26-2-62. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Adulterated” shall apply to any carcass, part thereof, meat, or meat food product under one or more of the following circumstances:

(A) If it bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render it injurious to health; but, in case the substance is not an added substance, such article shall not be considered adulterated under this subparagraph if the quantity of such substance in or on such article does not ordinarily render it injurious to health;

(B)(i) If it bears or contains, by reason of administration of any substance to the live animal or otherwise, any added poisonous or added deleterious substance, other than one which is a pesticide chemical in or on a raw agricultural commodity, a food additive, or a color additive, which may, in the judgment of the Commissioner, make such article unfit for human food;

(ii) If it is in whole or in part a raw agricultural commodity which bears or contains a pesticide chemical which is unsafe within the meaning of Section 408 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act;

(iii) If it bears or contains any food additive which is unsafe within the meaning of Section 409 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act;

(iv) If it bears or contains any color additive which is unsafe within the meaning of Section 721 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; or

(v) If an article which is not adulterated under division (ii), (iii), or (iv) of this subparagraph bears or contains any pesticide chemical, food additive, or color additive which is prohibited by regulations of the Commissioner in establishments at which inspection is maintained under Part 3 of this article;

(C) If it consists in whole or in part of any filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance or is for any other reason unsound, unhealthful, unwholesome, or otherwise unfit for human food;

(D) If it has been prepared, packed, or held under unsanitary

conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth or whereby it may have been rendered injurious to health;

(E) If it is in whole or in part the product of an animal which has died otherwise than by slaughter;

(F) If its container is composed in whole or in part of any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render the contents injurious to health;

(G) If it has been intentionally subjected to radiation, unless the use of the radiation was in conformity with a regulation or exemption in effect pursuant to Section 409 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act;

(H) If any valuable constituent has been in whole or in part omitted or abstracted therefrom; or if any substance has been substituted, wholly or in part therefor; or if damage or inferiority has been concealed in any manner; or if any substance has been added thereto or mixed or packed therewith so as to increase its bulk or weight or reduce its quality or strength or make it appear better or of greater value than it is; or

(I) If it is margarine containing animal fat and any of the raw material used therein consisted in whole or in part of any filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance.

(2) "Animal food manufacturer" means any person, firm, or corporation engaged in the business of manufacturing or processing food for animals, such food being derived wholly or in part from carcasses or parts or products of the carcasses of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines.

(3) "Capable of use as human food" shall apply to any carcass or part or product of a carcass of any animal, unless it is denatured or otherwise identified as required by regulations prescribed by the Commissioner to deter its use as human food, or unless it is naturally inedible by humans.

(4) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Georgia or his delegate.

(5) "Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act" means the act so entitled and acts amendatory thereof or supplementary thereto.

(6) "Federal Meat Inspection Act" means the act so entitled as amended by the Wholesome Meat Act.

(7) "Firm" means any partnership, association, or other unincorporated business organization.

(8) "Intrastate commerce" means commerce within this state.

(9) "Label" means a display of written, printed, or graphic matter upon the immediate container, not including package liners, of any article.

(10) "Labeling" means all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matter upon any article or any of its containers or wrappers or accompanying such article.

(11) "Meat broker" means any person, firm, or corporation engaged in the business of buying or selling, on commission, carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, or meat food products of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or otherwise negotiating purchases or sales of such articles other than for his or her own account or as an employee of another person, firm, or corporation.

(12) "Meat food product" means any product capable of use as human food which is made wholly or in part from any meat or other portion of the carcass of any cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, or goats, excepting products which contain meat or other portions of such carcasses only in a relatively small proportion or which historically have not been considered by consumers as products of the meat food industry and which are exempted from definition as a meat food product by the Commissioner under such conditions as the Commissioner may prescribe by regulation to assure that the meat or other portions of such carcasses contained in such product are not adulterated and that such products are not represented as meat food products. This term as applied to food products of equines shall have a meaning comparable to that provided in this paragraph with respect to cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, and goats.

(13) "Misbranded" shall apply to any carcass, part thereof, meat, or meat food product under one or more of the following circumstances:

- (A) If its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;
- (B) If it is offered for sale under the name of another food;
- (C) If it is an imitation of another food, unless its label bears, in type of uniform size and prominence, the word "imitation" and, immediately thereafter, the name of the food imitated;
- (D) If its container is so made, formed, or filled as to be misleading;
- (E) If in a package or other container, unless it bears a label showing: (i) the name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor; and (ii) an accurate statement of the

quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count, provided that reasonable variations may be permitted and exemptions as to small packages may be established by regulations promulgated by the Commissioner;

(F) If any word, statement, or other information required by or under authority of this article to appear on the label or other labeling is not prominently placed thereon with such conspicuousness, as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices in the labeling, and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use;

(G) If it purports to be or is represented as a food for which a definition and standard of identity or composition has been prescribed by regulations of the Commissioner under Code Section 26-2-107, unless it conforms to such definition and standard and its label bears the name of the food specified in the definition and standard and, insofar as may be required by such regulations, the common names of optional ingredients, other than spices, flavoring, and coloring, present in such food;

(H) If it purports to be or is represented as a food for which a standard or standards of fill of container have been prescribed by regulations of the Commissioner under Code Section 26-2-107 and it falls below the standard of fill of container applicable thereto, unless its label bears, in such manner and form as such regulations specify, a statement that it falls below such standard;

(I) If it is not subject to the provisions of subparagraph (G), unless its label bears:

(i) The common or usual name of the food, if there is any; and

(ii) In case it is fabricated from two or more ingredients, the common or usual name of each such ingredient; except that spices, flavorings, and colorings may, when authorized by the Commissioner, be designated as spices, flavorings, and coloring without naming each, provided that, to the extent that compliance with the requirements of this division is impracticable or results in deception or unfair competition, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the Commissioner;

(J) If it purports to be or is represented for special dietary uses, unless its label bears such information concerning its vitamin, mineral, and other dietary properties as the Commissioner, after consultation with the secretary of agriculture of the United States, determines to be, and by regulations prescribes as, necessary in order fully to inform purchasers as to its value for such uses;

(K) If it bears or contains any artificial flavoring, artificial coloring, or chemical preservative, unless it bears labeling stating that fact, provided that, to the extent that compliance with the requirements of this subparagraph is impracticable, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the Commissioner; or

(L) If it fails to bear, directly thereon or on its container, as the Commissioner may by regulations prescribe, the inspection legend and, unrestricted by any of the foregoing, such other information as the Commissioner may require in such regulations to assure that it will not have false or misleading labeling and that the public will be informed of the manner of handling required to maintain the article in a wholesome condition.

(13.1) “Nontraditional livestock” means:

(A) The species of Artiodactyla (even-toed ungulates) listed as antelope, bison, buffalo, catalo, elk, deer other than white-tailed deer, and water buffalo that are held and possessed legally under the wild animal provisions of Chapter 5 of Title 27; and

(B) Any avian species which are grown commercially for slaughter and preparation as human food but are not amenable to the Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act; provided, however, that such term shall not include any such avian species raised for recreational purposes which are not sold at wholesale or retail.

(14) “Official certificate” means any certificate prescribed by regulations of the Commissioner for issuance by an inspector or other person performing official functions under this article.

(15) “Official device” means any device prescribed or authorized by the Commissioner for use in applying any official mark.

(16) “Official inspection legend” means any symbol prescribed by regulations of the Commissioner showing that an article was inspected and passed in accordance with this article.

(17) “Official mark” means the official inspection legend or any other symbol prescribed by regulations of the Commissioner to identify the status of any article or animal under this article.

(18) “Pesticide chemical,” “food additive,” “color additive,” and “raw agricultural commodity” shall have the same meanings for purposes of this article as under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

(19) “Prepared” means slaughtered, canned, salted, rendered, boned, cut up, or otherwise manufactured or processed.

(20) “Renderer” means any person, firm, or corporation engaged in the business of rendering carcasses or parts or products of the carcasses of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, except rendering conducted under inspection under Part 3 of this article.

(21) “Retail establishment” means any establishment which sells, offers for sale, or displays for sale to the public any meat or meat product, whether prepared or otherwise, including any establishment in which meat or meat products are sold for consumption off the premises thereof.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 1; Ga. L. 1971, p. 56, § 1; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 12; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 1; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 8/SB 364; Ga. L. 2016, p. 426, § 1/HB 815; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 2/SB 345; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(3)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “Part 3 of this article” for “Code Sections 26-2-100 through 26-2-115” in division (1)(B)(v) and paragraph (20).

U.S. Code.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic

Act, referred to throughout this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 301 et seq. Section 408 of that Act, referred to in division (1)(B)(ii) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 346a. Section 409 of that Act, referred to in division (1)(B)(iii) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 348. Section 721 of that Act, referred to in division (1)(B)(iv) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 379(e).

The Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Federal Wholesome Meat Act, referred to in paragraph (6) of this Code section, are codified at 21 U.S.C. § 601 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 18 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 21 et seq.

ALR.

Construction and application of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act § 402 (a)(3)

[21 USC § 342 (a) (3)] as to food deemed “adulterated,” if it is filthy or the like, or unfit for food, 45 A.L.R.2d 861.

What is “drug” within meaning of § 201(g)(1) of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USCS § 321(g)(1)), 127 A.L.R. Fed. 141.

26-2-63. Federal and state cooperation.

(a) The Georgia Department of Agriculture, acting by and through the Commissioner, is designated as the state agency which shall be responsible for cooperating with the secretary of agriculture of the United States under the provisions of the Federal Meat Inspection Act and other related federal acts; and said department is directed to cooperate with the secretary of agriculture of the United States in developing and administering the meat inspection program of this state under this article to assure that its requirements will be at least equal to those imposed under Titles I and IV of the Federal Meat Inspection Act and in developing and administering the program of this state

under Part 4 of this article in such a manner as will effectuate the purposes of this article and applicable federal acts.

(b) In such cooperative efforts, the Commissioner is authorized to accept from the secretary advisory assistance in planning and otherwise developing the state program; technical and laboratory assistance and training, including necessary curricular and instructional materials and equipment; and financial and other aid for administration of such a program. The Commissioner is further authorized to spend public funds of this state appropriated for administration of this article in furtherance of the cooperative program.

(c) The Commissioner is authorized to recommend to the secretary of agriculture such officials or employees of this state as the Commissioner shall designate for appointment to the advisory committees provided for in the Federal Meat Inspection Act; and the Commissioner shall serve as the representative of the Governor for consultation with the secretary under such act.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 20.

ferred to in this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 601 et seq.

U.S. Code.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act, re-

26-2-64. Concurrent enforcement jurisdiction.

Consistent with the Federal Meat Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. Section 601, et seq., the Commissioner may exercise concurrent jurisdiction with the secretary of agriculture of the United States and may enforce this article and any regulations promulgated pursuant thereto without regard to licensing agency.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 28; Ga. L. 2007,

p. 620, § 1/HB 433; Ga. L. 2016, p. 426, § 2/HB 815.

PART 2

ENFORCEMENT OF ARTICLE

26-2-80. Promulgation of regulations.

The Commissioner is authorized to promulgate, from time to time, such regulations as are necessary to effectuate the purpose of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 31.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Meat Inspection - Meat Processing, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regu-

lations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry Inspection, Rule 40-10-1-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 3 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 5.

26-2-81. Powers of Commissioner; reports.

(a) The Commissioner shall also have power:

(1) To gather and compile information concerning and to investigate from time to time the organization, business, conduct, practices, and management of any person, firm, or corporation subject to this article and the relation thereof to other persons, firms, and corporations; and

(2) To require, by regulation, persons, firms, and corporations subject to this article, or any class of them, to file with the Commissioner, in such form as he may prescribe, annual or special, or both annual and special, reports or answers in writing to specific questions, furnishing to the Commissioner such information as he may require as to the organization, business, conduct, practices, management, and relation to other persons, firms, and corporations of the person, firm, or corporation filing such reports or answers in writing. Such reports and answers shall be made under oath, or otherwise as the Commissioner may prescribe, and shall be filed with the Commissioner within such reasonable period as he may prescribe, unless additional time is granted in any case by the Commissioner.

(b) For the purposes of this article, the Commissioner shall at all reasonable times have access to, for the purpose of examination, and the right to copy any documentary evidence of any person, firm, or corporation being investigated or proceeded against and may require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of all documentary evidence of any person, firm, or corporation relating to any matter under investigation. The Commissioner, hearing officer, or other designate may sign subpoenas and may administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive evidence.

(1) The attendance of witnesses and the production of documentary evidence may be required at any designated place of hearing. In case of disobedience to a subpoena, the Commissioner may apply to the superior court for an order requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of documentary evidence.

(2) The appropriate superior court may, in case of contumacy or refusal to obey a subpoena issued to any person, firm, or corporation, issue an order requiring such person, firm, or corporation to appear before the Commissioner, or to produce documentary evidence if so ordered, or to give evidence touching the matter in question; and any

failure to obey the order of the court may be punished by such court as a contempt thereof.

(c)(1)(A) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation willfully to:

(i) Make, or cause to be made, any false entry or statement of fact in any report required to be made under this article;

(ii) Make, or cause to be made, any false entry in any account, record, or memorandum kept by any person, firm, or corporation subject to this article;

(iii) Neglect or fail to make, or cause to be made, full, true, and correct entries in such accounts, records, or memoranda of all facts and transactions appertaining to the business of such person, firm, or corporation;

(iv) Remove out of the jurisdiction of this state or mutilate, alter, or by any other means falsify or conceal any documentary evidence of any such person, firm, or corporation; or

(v) Refuse to submit to the Commissioner or to any of his authorized agents, for the purpose of inspection and taking copies, any documentary evidence of any such person, firm, or corporation in his possession or within his control.

(B) Any person or the officers or agents of any firm or corporation who violate this subsection shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment of not more than three years or by a fine not to exceed \$5,000.00, or both.

(2) If any person, firm, or corporation required by this article to file any annual or special report fails so to do within the time fixed by the Commissioner for filing the report and such failure shall continue for 30 days after notice of such default, such person, firm, or corporation shall forfeit to this state the sum of \$100.00 for each and every day of the continuance of such failure, which forfeiture shall be payable into the state treasury and shall be recoverable in a civil action in the name of the state brought in the county where the person, firm, or corporation has his or its principal office or in any county in which he or it shall do business. It shall be the duty of the Attorney General to prosecute for the recovery of such forfeitures.

(3) Information obtained by the Commissioner pursuant to the authority of this article shall not be made public by any officer or employee of this state without the authorization of the Commissioner. Such information and records shall not be subject to Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50, providing for the inspection of public records.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 27; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 3 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 14, 15, 57, 68, 76
C.J.S., Records, §§ 70, 71.

26-2-82. Administrative penalties; judicial review.

The Commissioner, in order to enforce this article or any orders, rules, and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, may issue an administrative order imposing a penalty not to exceed \$1,000.00 for each violation whenever the Commissioner, after a hearing, determines that any person has violated this article or any regulations or orders promulgated under this article. The hearing and any administrative review thereof shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure for contested cases under Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." Any person who has exhausted all administrative remedies available and who is aggrieved or adversely affected by any final order or action of the Commissioner shall have the right of judicial review thereof in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." All penalties recovered as provided for in this article shall be paid into the state treasury. The Commissioner may file in the superior court of the county where the person under order resides or, if said person is a corporation, in the county wherein the corporation maintains its principal place of business or in the county wherein the violation occurred a certified copy of a final order of the Commissioner unappealed from, or of a final order of the Commissioner affirmed upon appeal, whereupon said court shall render judgment in accordance therewith and notify the parties. Such judgment shall have the same effect, and all proceedings in relation thereto shall thereafter be the same, as though said judgment has been rendered in an action duly heard and determined by said court. The penalty prescribed in this Code section shall be concurrent, alternative, and cumulative with any and all other civil, criminal, or alternative rights, remedies, forfeitures, or penalties provided, allowed, or available to the Commissioner with respect to any violation of this article and any orders, rules, or regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

History.

Ga. L. 1979, p. 1037, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 49 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 16, 59.

ALR.

Recovery of cumulative statutory penalties, 71 A.L.R.2d 986.

26-2-83. Authority to refuse or withdraw meat inspection service.

(a) The Commissioner is authorized to refuse to provide or to withdraw inspection service under Part 3 of this article and to revoke or suspend any license issued by the Department of Agriculture to any person, firm, or corporation subject to this article who shall violate any of the laws of this state pertaining to the department or any of the rules and regulations of the department promulgated pursuant to such laws, or who is unfit to engage in any business requiring inspection under Part 3 of this article because the applicant or recipient has been convicted in any federal or state court of:

(1) Any felony; or

(2) More than one violation of any law, other than a felony, based upon the acquiring, handling, or distributing of unwholesome, mislabeled, or deceptively packaged food or upon fraud in connection with transactions in food.

(b) This Code section shall not affect in any way other provisions of this article for withdrawal of inspection services under Part 3 of this article from establishments failing to maintain sanitary conditions or to destroy condemned carcasses, parts, meat, or meat food products.

(c) For the purpose of this Code section, a person shall be deemed to be responsibly connected with the business if he was a partner, officer, director, holder, or owner of 10 percent or more of its voting stock or an employee in a managerial or executive capacity.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 21; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(4)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Part 3 of this article” for “Code Sections 26-2-100 through 26-2-115” twice in subsection (a) and in subsection (b).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11 et seq., 49 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 41, 62.

26-2-84. Detention of carcasses, meat, and meat food products suspected of being adulterated or misbranded; removal of official marks.

Whenever any carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or any product exempted from the definition of a meat food product, or any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbit, goat, or equine is found by any authorized representative of the Commissioner upon any premises where it is held for purposes of, or during or after, distribution and there is reason to believe that any such article is adulterated or misbranded and is capable of use as human food, or that it has not been inspected, in violation of Part 3 of this article or Title I of the Federal Meat Inspection Act or the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, or that such article or animal has been or is intended to be distributed in violation of any such provisions, it may be detained by such representative for a period not to exceed 20 days, pending action under Code Section 26-2-86 or notification of any federal authorities having jurisdiction over such article or animal; and it shall not be moved by any person, firm, or corporation from the place at which it is located when so detained, until released by such representative. All official marks may be required by such representative to be removed from such article or animal before it is released unless it appears to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the article or animal is eligible to retain such marks.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 22; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26; Ga. L.

1995, p. 244, § 13; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 2; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 9/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239 et seq.

26-2-85. Seizure and condemnation of carcasses, meat, and meat food products.

(a) Any carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbit, goat, or equine, that is being transported or is held for sale in this state after such transportation, and that is or has been prepared, sold, transported, or otherwise distributed or offered or received for distribution in violation of this article, is capable of use as human food and is adulterated or misbranded, or in any other way is in violation of this article, shall be liable

to be proceeded against and seized and condemned, at any time, on an action for condemnation to be brought by the Commissioner in the superior court of the county in which the article or animal is found.

(b) If the article or animal is condemned, it shall, after entry of the decree, be disposed of by destruction or sale as the court may direct. The proceeds, if sold, less the court costs and fees and storage and other proper expenses, shall be paid into the state treasury. The article or animals shall not be sold contrary to the provisions of this article or the Federal Meat Inspection Act or the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

(c) Upon the execution and delivery of a good and sufficient bond conditioned that the article or animal shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of contrary to this article or the laws of the United States, the court may direct that such article or animal be delivered to the owner thereof subject to such supervision by authorized representatives of the Commissioner as is necessary to ensure compliance with the applicable laws.

(d) When a decree of condemnation is entered against the article or animal and it is released under bond or destroyed, court costs and fees and storage and other proper expenses shall be awarded against the person, if any, intervening as claimant of the article or animal.

(e) This Code section shall in no way derogate from authority for condemnation or seizure conferred by other provisions of this article or other laws but shall be cumulative to such other authority.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 23; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 14; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 3; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 10/SB 364.

U.S. Code.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic

Act, referred to in subsection (b) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 301 et seq.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act, referred to in subsection (b) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 601 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 58.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Lawfulness of seizure of property used

in violation of law as prerequisite to forfeiture action or proceeding, 8 A.L.R.3d 473.

26-2-86. Injunctions.

In addition to other remedies provided for in this article, the Commissioner is authorized to apply to the superior court of the appropriate county for an injunction. Such court shall have jurisdiction,

upon hearing and for cause shown, to grant a temporary or permanent injunction restraining any person from violating any provision of this article, notwithstanding whether or not there exists an adequate remedy at law or the fact that the conduct sought to be enjoined is in violation of the criminal provisions of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 24.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 52.

26-2-87. Written notice or warning sufficient for minor violations.

Nothing in this article shall be construed as requiring the Commissioner to report, for prosecution or for the institution of an action or injunction proceedings, minor violations of this article, whenever he believes that the public interest will be adequately served by a suitable written notice or warning.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 41.

26-2-88. Penalties for fraud or distribution of adulterated articles; penalties for slaughter or distribution of diseased or cancerous animals.

(a) Any person, firm, or corporation who violates this article with intent to defraud or who distributes or attempts to distribute an article that is adulterated, except as defined in subparagraph (H) of paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-2-62, shall be subject to imprisonment for not more than three years or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both, provided that no person, firm, or corporation shall be subject to penalties under this subsection for receiving for transportation any article or animal in violation of this article if such receipt was made in good faith, unless such person, firm, or corporation refuses to furnish, on request of a representative of the Commissioner, the name and address of the person from whom he received such article or animal and copies of all documents, if there are any, pertaining to the delivery of the article or animal to him.

(b) Any person who unlawfully slaughters any diseased or cancerous

animal for purposes of selling any part of the carcass for human consumption or who knowingly distributes or attempts to distribute any part of such a carcass for human consumption shall be guilty of a felony and punished by imprisonment for not less than three years or more than ten years or by a fine of not less than \$10,000.00 or more than \$50,000.00, or both.

(c) Any person who violates any of the provisions of this article for which a penalty is not otherwise prescribed in this article or who violates any rule or regulation promulgated under this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, §§ 25, 29; Ga. L. 1982, p. 980, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 26; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 26.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing contaminated meat, § 26-2-180 et seq.

Cross references.

Disposal of diseased, disabled or deceased animals, § 4-5-1 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq.

mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

Recovery for loss of business resulting from resale of unwholesome food or beverages furnished by another, 17 A.L.R.2d 1379.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or

PART 3

INSPECTION, HANDLING, AND LABELING STANDARDS

26-2-100. Duties of inspectors.

The Commissioner shall appoint, from time to time, inspectors to make examination and inspection of all cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines, the inspection of which is provided for, and of all carcasses and parts thereof, and of all meats and meat food products thereof, and of the sanitary conditions of all establishments in which such meat and meat food products are prepared. Said inspectors shall refuse to stamp, mark, tag, or label any carcass or any part thereof, or meat food product therefrom, prepared in any establishment described in this chapter until the same shall have actually been inspected and found to be not adulterated. Said inspectors shall perform such other duties as are provided by this article and by the rules and regulations to be promulgated by the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 13; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 15; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 4; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 11/SB 364.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Meat and Poultry Inspection Rules of

Practice, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry Inspection, Rule 40-10-5-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 31. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 12, 42.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 71. 36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 14, 19, 20.

26-2-100.1. Examinations and inspections of nontraditional livestock carcasses, meats, and meat food products.

All examinations and inspections of nontraditional livestock carcasses and parts thereof, of nontraditional livestock meats and meat food products thereof, of sanitary conditions of all establishments in which nontraditional livestock meat and meat food products are prepared, and any other examination or inspection of nontraditional livestock and products thereof under or pursuant to this article shall be conducted by and through a voluntary inspection program with all costs thereof paid by the establishment slaughtering the nontraditional livestock or preparing such meat or meat food product, at rates established by the Commissioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-100.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 16; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 5; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 12/SB 364.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Voluntary Inspection of Non-traditional

Livestock and Non-traditional Poultry, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry Inspection, Rule 40-10-4-.01 et seq.

26-2-101. Inspections and examinations generally.

All inspections and examinations made under this article shall be such and made in such manner as described in the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner, if not inconsistent with this article. This article may be administered in conjunction with the administration of Article 2 of this chapter.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 13; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26.

26-2-102. Inspection of animals prior to slaughter or preparation; slaughtering and examination of diseased animals; refusal or suspension of inspections.

(a) For the purpose of preventing the use in commerce of meat food products which are adulterated, the Commissioner shall cause to be made, by inspectors appointed for that purpose, an examination and inspection of all cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines before they shall be allowed to enter into any slaughtering, packing, meat-canning, rendering, or similar establishment in this state in which slaughtering and preparation of meat and meat food products of such animals are conducted for commerce.

(b) All cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines found on such inspection to show symptoms of disease shall be set apart and slaughtered separately from all other cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines; and, when so slaughtered, the carcasses of said cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines shall be subject to a careful examination and inspection, all as provided by the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner.

(c) For the purpose of preventing the inhumane slaughtering of livestock, the Commissioner shall cause to be made, by inspectors appointed for that purpose, an examination and inspection of the method by which cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines are slaughtered and handled in connection with slaughter in the slaughtering establishments inspected under this article. The Commissioner may refuse to provide inspection to a new slaughtering establishment or may cause inspection to be suspended temporarily at a slaughtering establishment if the Commissioner finds that any cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines have been slaughtered or handled in connection with slaughter at such establishment by any method not in accordance with paragraph (2) of Code Section 26-2-110 and Code Section 26-2-110.1 until the establishment furnishes assurances satisfactory to the Commissioner that all slaughtering and handling in connection with slaughter of livestock shall be in accordance with such a method.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 3; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1981, p. 657, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 17; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 6; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 13/SB 364.

Cross references.

Powers and duties of Commissioner re-

garding prevention of spread of parasitic livestock diseases, § 4-4-60 et seq.

Regulation of business of livestock dealers generally, § 4-6-1 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36 et seq. 35A
Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 31 et seq.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, §§ 126, 142, 238.
36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 14, 19.

26-2-103. Post-mortem inspection and marking of carcasses and parts; disposition of condemned carcasses and parts; reinspection; removal of inspectors.

(a) The Commissioner shall cause to be made, by inspectors appointed for that purpose, a post-mortem examination and inspection of the carcasses and parts thereof of all cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines, capable of use as human food, to be prepared at any slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishment in this state in which such articles are prepared for commerce.

(b) The carcasses and parts thereof of all such animals found to be not adulterated shall be marked, stamped, tagged, or labeled as "Inspected and Passed"; and said inspectors shall label, mark, stamp, or tag as "Inspected and Condemned," all carcasses and parts thereof of animals found to be adulterated; and all carcasses and parts thereof thus inspected and condemned shall be made unfit for human consumption by such establishment in the presence of an inspector; and the Commissioner may remove inspectors from any establishment which fails so to destroy any such condemned carcass or part thereof.

(c) Inspectors, after the first inspection, shall, when they deem it necessary, reinspect said carcasses or parts thereof to determine whether since the first inspection the same have become adulterated. If any carcass or any part thereof shall, upon examination and inspection subsequent to the first examination and inspection, be found to be adulterated, it shall be made unfit for human consumption by such establishment in the presence of an inspector. The Commissioner may remove inspectors from any establishment which fails to destroy any such condemned carcass or part thereof.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 4; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26; Ga. L.

1995, p. 244, § 18; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 7; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 14/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36 et seq. 35A
Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 238. 36A C.J.S.,
Food, § 14.

26-2-104. Inspection of carcasses, parts, meat, and meat products brought into or returned to slaughtering or packing establishments; limitations on entry of carcasses, parts, meat, and meat products.

(a) Code Sections 26-2-102 and 26-2-103 shall apply to all carcasses or parts of carcasses of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines, or the meat or meat products thereof, capable of use as human food, which may be brought into any slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishment where inspection under this part is maintained; and such examination and inspection shall be had before the carcasses or parts thereof shall be allowed to enter into any department wherein the same are to be treated and prepared for meat food products.

(b) Code Sections 26-2-102 and 26-2-103 shall also apply to all such products which, after having been issued from any such slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishment, shall be returned to the same or to any similar establishment where such inspection is maintained.

(c) The Commissioner may limit the entry of carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, and meat food products, and other materials into any establishment at which inspection under this part is maintained, under such conditions as he may prescribe, to assure that allowing the entry of such articles into such inspected establishments will be consistent with the purposes of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 5; Ga. L. 1974, p.
453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 19; Ga. L.

1996, p. 1219, § 8; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458,
§ 15/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36 et seq. 35A
Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239. 36A C.J.S.,
Food, § 12.

26-2-105. Inspection of meat food products where prepared; inspection markings; disposition of condemned meat food products; removal of inspectors.

(a) The Commissioner shall cause to be made, by inspectors ap-

pointed for that purpose, an examination and inspection of all meat food products prepared in any slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishment where such articles are prepared for commerce.

(b) For the purpose of any examination and inspection, said inspectors shall have access at all times, by day or night, whether the establishment be operated or not, to every part of said establishment.

(c) The inspectors shall mark, stamp, tag, or label as "Inspected and Passed" all such products found to be not adulterated; and said inspectors shall label, mark, stamp, or tag as "Inspected and Condemned" all such products found adulterated; and all such condemned meat food products shall be made unfit for human consumption, as provided for in Code Section 26-2-103. The Commissioner may remove inspectors from any establishment which fails to destroy such condemned meat food products.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36 et seq. 35A
Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239. 36A C.J.S.,
Food, § 17.

26-2-106. Inspection of meat and meat food products in retail and other food service establishments; disposition of condemned meat; sale or display of noninspected meat or meat food products.

(a) The Commissioner shall periodically require meat inspectors to inspect meat and meat products located within or held for sale or consumption in retail establishments and other food service establishments for the purpose of ascertaining whether the same has been inspected by a federal or state meat inspector. Any meat or meat product which does not appear to have been inspected previously by a federal or state meat inspector shall be labeled as unfit for sale and shall not be sold. Any meat found to be adulterated shall be made unfit for human consumption, as provided for in Code Section 26-2-103. For the purpose of any examination and inspection said inspectors shall have access to every part of said establishment during normal hours of operation or at such other times when meat processing operations are being conducted. Said inspectors shall be accompanied by the owner or his authorized agent.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any retail establishment and other food service establishments to sell or display for sale any meat or meat food

products which shall have been found by said inspectors to be adulterated or which have not been inspected by a federal or state meat inspector.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 56, § 2; Ga. L. 2016, p. 426, § 3/HB 815.

Cross references.

Standards for food service establishments, § 26-2-370 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 11 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application

of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

26-2-107. Labeling of meat, meat food products, and carcasses; standards and definitions; use of false or misleading labels or containers.

(a) When any meat or meat food product which has been inspected as provided for in Code Sections 26-2-102 through 26-2-106, and marked as “Inspected and Passed” shall be placed or packed in any can, pot, tin, canvas, or other receptacle or covering in any establishment where inspection under this article is maintained, the person, firm, or corporation preparing said product shall attach a label to said can, pot, tin, canvas, or other receptacle or covering, under supervision of an inspector, which label shall state that the contents thereof have been “Inspected and Passed” under this article. No inspection and examination of meat or meat food products deposited or enclosed in cans, tins, pots, canvas, or other receptacles or coverings in any establishment where inspection under this article is maintained shall be deemed to be complete until such meat or meat food products have been sealed or enclosed in said can, tin, pot, canvas, or other receptacle or covering under the supervision of an inspector.

(b) All carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, and meat food products inspected at any establishment under the authority of this article and found to be not adulterated shall at the time they leave the establishment bear, in distinctly legible form, directly thereon or on their containers, as the Commissioner may require, the information required under paragraph (13) of Code Section 26-2-62.

(c) The Commissioner, whenever he determines such action is necessary for the protection of the public, may prescribe the styles and sizes of type to be used with respect to material required to be incorporated in labeling to avoid false or misleading labeling of any articles or animals subject to this part or to Part 4 of this article;

definitions and standards of identity or composition for articles subject to this part and standards of fill of container for such articles not inconsistent with any such standards established under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or under the Federal Meat Inspection Act; and there shall be consultation between the Commissioner and the secretary of agriculture of the United States prior to the issuance of such standards to avoid inconsistency between such standards and the federal standards.

(d) No article subject to this part shall be sold or offered for sale by any person, firm, or corporation under any name or other marking or labeling which is false or misleading, or in any container of a misleading form or size. Established trade names and other marking and labeling and containers which are not false or misleading and which are approved by the Commissioner are permitted.

(e) If the Commissioner has reason to believe that any marking or labeling or the size or form of any container in use or proposed for use with respect to any article subject to this part is false or misleading in any particular, he may direct that such use be withheld unless the marking, labeling, or container is modified in such manner as he may prescribe so that it will not be false or misleading. If the person, firm, or corporation using or proposing to use the marking, labeling, or container does not accept the determination of the Commissioner, such person, firm, or corporation may request a hearing; but the use of the marking, labeling, or container shall, if the Commissioner so directs, be withheld pending hearing and final determination by the Commissioner. Any hearing conducted pursuant to this subsection shall be in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 23 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 21, 44, 45.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring

notice by label or otherwise of the fact that product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

26-2-108. Sanitary inspections of slaughter and packing establishments; sanitation regulations; labeling adulterated meat and meat food products.

The Commissioner shall cause to be made, by experts in sanitation or by other competent inspectors, such inspection as may be necessary to

inform himself or herself about the sanitary conditions of all slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishments in which cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines are slaughtered and the meat and meat food products thereof are prepared for commerce. The Commissioner shall prescribe the rules and regulations of sanitation under which such establishments shall be maintained; and, where the sanitary conditions of any such establishment are such that the meat or meat food products are rendered adulterated, the Commissioner shall refuse to allow the meat or meat food products to be labeled, marked, stamped, or tagged as “Inspected and Passed.”

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 8; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 20; Ga. L.

1996, p. 1219, § 9; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 16/SB 364.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1910, § 2119 are included in annotations for this Code section.

Slaughter houses are subject to sanitary regulations. Schoen Bros. v. Pylant, 162 Ga. 565, 134 S.E. 304, 1926 Ga. LEXIS 239 (1926) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2119, subdivision (3)).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239. 36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 38 et seq.

26-2-109. Timing of examination and inspection of slaughtered animals and food products.

The Commissioner shall cause an examination and inspection of all cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines, and the food products thereof, slaughtered and prepared in the establishments described in this part. Such inspection shall be made during the nighttime as well as during the daytime, when the slaughtering of said cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, and other equines or the preparation of said food products is conducted during the nighttime.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 9; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 21; Ga. L.

1996, p. 1219, § 10; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 17/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239. 36A C.J.S., Food, § 17.

26-2-110. Slaughter, preparation, sale, or transportation of animals, meat, or meat food products generally.

No person, firm, or corporation shall, with respect to any cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or any carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, or meat food products of any such animals:

(1) Slaughter any such animals or prepare any such articles which are capable of use as human food, at any establishment preparing such articles for commerce except in compliance with this article;

(2) Slaughter or handle in connection with such slaughter any such animals in any manner not declared to be humane under Code Section 26-2-110.1;

(3) Sell, transport, offer for sale or transportation, or receive for transportation, in commerce:

(A) Any such articles which:

(i) Are capable of use as human food; and

(ii) Are adulterated or misbranded at the time of such sale, transportation, offer for sale or transportation, or receipt for transportation; or

(B) Any articles required to be inspected under this part unless they have been so inspected and passed; or

(4) With respect to any such articles which are capable of use as human food, do any act while they are being transported in commerce or held for sale after such transportation which is intended to cause or has the effect of causing such articles to be adulterated or misbranded.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 10; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1981, p. 657, § 2; Ga. L.

1995, p. 244, § 22; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 11; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 18/SB 364.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1910,

§ 2119 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Slaughter houses are subject to

sanitary regulations. Schoen Bros. v. Ga. LEXIS 239 (1926) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2119, subdivision (3)).
Pylant, 162 Ga. 565, 134 S.E. 304, 1926

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 21 et seq.

26-2-110.1. Approved methods for handling and slaughtering of animals; designation by Commissioner of methods of handling and slaughtering.

(a) For purposes of this article, the following methods of slaughtering and handling are declared to be humane:

(1) In the case of cattle, calves, horses, mules, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, and other livestock, all animals are to be rendered insensible to pain by a single blow or gunshot or by an electrical, chemical, or other means which is rapid and effective before being shackled, hoisted, thrown, cast, or cut; or

(2) By slaughtering and handling in connection with such slaughtering in accordance with the ritual requirements of the Jewish faith or any other religious faith that prescribes a method of slaughter whereby the animal suffers loss of consciousness by anemia of the brain caused by the simultaneous and instantaneous severance of the carotid arteries with a sharp instrument.

(b) In addition to the methods prescribed in subsection (a) of this Code section, the Commissioner may designate as humane any methods of slaughtering and handling which have been so designated by the United States secretary of agriculture on or before April 7, 1981, pursuant to United States Code Section 7-1904. The Commissioner is further authorized to designate as humane other methods of slaughtering and handling which have been demonstrated by research, investigation, and experimentation to be humane with reference to the speed and scope of slaughtering operations and with reference to other existing methods and then current scientific knowledge.

History.

244, § 23; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 12; Ga. L. 1981, p. 657, § 3; Ga. L. 1995, p. L. 2008, p. 458, § 19/SB 364.

26-2-111. Labeling and preparation of carcasses, meat, and meat food products of equines.

No person, firm, or corporation shall sell, transport, offer for sale or transportation, or receive for transportation, in commerce, any carcasses of horses, mules, or other equines, or parts of such carcasses, or the meat or meat food products thereof unless they are plainly and conspicuously marked or labeled or otherwise identified as required by

regulations promulgated by the Commissioner to show the kinds of animals from which they were derived. When required by the Commissioner with respect to establishments at which inspection is maintained under this part, such animals and their carcasses, parts thereof, meat, and meat food products shall be prepared in establishments separate from those in which cattle, sheep, swine, rabbits, or goats are slaughtered or their carcasses, parts thereof, meats, or meat food products are prepared.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 12; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1.

Cross references.

Sale of horse meat, § 26-2-157 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 21 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring

notice by label or otherwise of the fact that product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

26-2-112. Inspection exceptions; labeling and handling of custom slaughtered and prepared meat or meat food products.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this Code section, the provisions of this part requiring inspection of the slaughter of animals and the preparation of the carcasses, parts thereof, meat, and meat food products at establishments conducting such operations shall not apply to:

(1) The slaughtering by any person of animals of his or her own raising and the preparation by him or her and transportation in commerce of the carcasses, parts thereof, meat, and meat food products of such animals exclusively for use by him or her and members of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests and employees;

(2) The custom slaughter by any person, firm, or corporation of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, or goats delivered by the owner thereof for such slaughter and the preparation by such slaughterer and transportation in commerce of the carcasses, parts thereof, meat, and meat food products of such animals exclusively for use in the household of such owner by the owner and members of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests and employees; nor to the custom preparation by any person, firm, or corporation of carcasses, parts thereof, meat, or meat food products derived from the slaughter by any person of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, or goats of his or her own raising, or from game animals, delivered by the owner thereof for such custom

preparation and transportation in commerce of such custom prepared articles, exclusively for use in the household of such owner by him or her and members of his or her household and his or her nonpaying guests and employees, provided that, in cases where such person, firm, or corporation engages in such custom operations at an establishment at which inspection under this article is maintained, the Commissioner may exempt from such inspection at such establishment any animals slaughtered or any meat or meat food products otherwise prepared on such custom basis. Custom operations at any establishment shall be exempt from inspection requirements as provided by this Code section only if the establishment complies with regulations which the Commissioner is authorized to promulgate to assure that any carcasses, parts thereof, meat, or meat food products, wherever handled on a custom basis, or any containers or packages containing such articles are separated at all times from carcasses, parts thereof, meat, or meat food products prepared for sale; that all such articles prepared on a custom basis or any containers or packages containing such articles are plainly marked "Not for Sale" immediately after being prepared and kept so identified until delivered to the owner; and that the establishment conducting the custom operation is maintained and operated in a sanitary manner; or

(3) The slaughtering and processing of rabbits by any person who raises rabbits for slaughter and processing for sale at wholesale and retail in numbers not to exceed 2,500 rabbits per year.

(b) The provisions of this article requiring inspection of the slaughter of animals and the preparation of carcasses, parts thereof, meat, and meat food products shall not apply to operations of types traditionally and usually conducted at retail stores and restaurants, when conducted at any retail store or restaurant or similar retail-type establishment for sale in normal retail quantities or service of such articles to consumers at such establishments.

(c) The slaughter of animals and preparation of articles referred to in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) and in subsection (b) of this Code section shall be conducted in accordance with such sanitary conditions as the Commissioner may by regulations prescribe. Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this Code section, the Commissioner or his delegate is authorized to enter upon the premises of any establishment which is exempt from regular inspections under the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section and inspect such establishment and any facilities, carcasses, parts thereof, meat, meat food products, containers, and packaging to determine whether such establishment qualifies for exemption from regular inspections and is otherwise in compliance with the laws of this state and the rules and regulations of the Commissioner adopted pursuant thereto.

(d) The adulteration and misbranding provisions of this part, other than the requirement of the inspection legend, shall apply to articles which are not required to be inspected under this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 14; Ga. L. 1971, p. 57, § 1; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1977, p. 849, §§ 1, 2; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26; Ga. L. 1989, p. 335, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 24; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 13; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 20/SB 364.

Law reviews.

For note on 1989 amendment of this Code section, see 6 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 253 (1989).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, § 239. 36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 38, 90.

26-2-113. Storage and handling regulations for carcasses, meat, and meat food products.

The Commissioner may by regulations prescribe conditions under which carcasses, parts of carcasses, meat, and meat food products of cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, capable of use as human food, shall be stored or otherwise handled by any person, firm, or corporation engaged in the business of buying, selling, freezing, storing, or transporting such articles whenever the Commissioner deems such action necessary to assure that such articles will not be adulterated or misbranded when delivered to the consumer.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 15; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 25; Ga.

L. 1996, p. 1219, § 14; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 21/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 14, 15, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 21 et seq.

26-2-114. Fraudulent practices.

(a) No brand manufacturer, printer, or other person, firm, or corporation shall cast, print, lithograph, or otherwise make any device containing any official mark or simulation thereof, or any label bearing any such mark or simulation, or any form of official certificate or simulation thereof, except as authorized by the Commissioner.

(b) No person, firm, or corporation shall:

(1) Forge any official device, mark, or certificate;

(2) Without authorization from the Commissioner, use any official device, mark, or certificate, or simulation thereof, or alter, detach, deface, or destroy any official device, mark, or certificate;

(3) Contrary to the regulations promulgated by the Commissioner, fail to use or to detach, deface, or destroy any official device, mark, or certificate;

(4) Knowingly possess, without promptly notifying the Commissioner or his representative, any official device, or any counterfeit, simulated, forged, or improperly altered official certificate, or any device or label, or any carcass of any animal, or part or product thereof, bearing any counterfeit, simulated, forged, or improperly altered official mark;

(5) Knowingly make any false statement in any shipper's certificate or other nonofficial or official certificate provided for in the regulations prescribed by the Commissioner; or

(6) Knowingly represent that any article has been inspected and passed or exempted under this article when, in fact, it has, respectively, not been so inspected and passed or exempted.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 11.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 21, 41.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring

notice by label or otherwise of the fact that product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

26-2-115. Use of "Georgia" in trademark, trade name, service mark, or advertisement.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person, partnership, firm, or corporation to use the word "Georgia" in any trademark, trade name, service mark, or advertisement in connection with any meat or meat food product which is not equal to or better than U.S. grade "good."

(b) Any person who violates this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1971, p. 757, § 1.

Joint marketing with Department of Economic Development, § 50-7-8.

Cross references.

Trademarks, service marks, and trade names generally, § 10-1-440 et seq.

26-2-116. Applicability of part to federally inspected slaughtering and packing establishments.

The ante mortem, post-mortem, and sanitary inspection services provided for in this part are not required at any slaughtering, meat-canning, salting, packing, rendering, or similar establishment at which such services are furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to the Federal Meat Inspection Act.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 32.

ferred to in this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 601 et seq.

U.S. Code.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act, re-

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 9.

PART 4**MEAT PROCESSORS AND RELATED INDUSTRIES****Cross references.**

Regulation of business of rendering and disposal plants, § 4-4-40 et seq.

26-2-130. Buying, selling, transporting, or receiving of dead, dying, disabled, or diseased animals.

No person, firm, or corporation engaged in the business of buying, selling, or transporting in commerce dead, dying, disabled, or diseased animals, or any parts of the carcasses of any such animals, shall buy, sell, transport, offer for sale or transportation, or receive for transportation any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or parts of the carcasses of any such animals, unless such transaction or transportation is made in accordance with such regulations as the Commissioner may promulgate, to assure that such animals, or the unwholesome parts or products thereof, will be prevented from being used for human food purposes.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 19; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 26; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 15; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 22/SB 364.

Cross references.

Disposal of dead animals and accessory waste material, § 4-5-7.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Dead Animal Disposal, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Animal Health Division, Rule 40-13-5-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, §§ 126 et seq., 146. 36A C.J.S., Food, § 23.

26-2-131. Registration of dealers in dead, dying, diseased, or disabled animals.

No person, firm, or corporation shall engage in business as a meat broker, renderer, or animal food manufacturer or engage in business as a wholesaler of any carcasses, or parts or products of the carcasses, of any cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, whether intended for human food or other purposes, or engage in business as a public warehouseman storing any such articles, or engage in the business of buying, selling, or transporting in commerce any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased animals of the specified kinds, or parts of such carcasses of any such animals unless, when required by regulations of the Commissioner, he or she has registered with the Commissioner his or her name and the address of each place of business at which, and all trade names under which, he or she conducts such business.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 18; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 27; Ga.

L. 1996, p. 1219, § 16; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 23/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

4 Am. Jur. 2d, Animals, § 36. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

3B C.J.S., Animals, §§ 126 et seq., 146. 36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

26-2-132. Maintenance and inspection of records.

(a) The following classes of persons, firms, and corporations shall keep such records as will fully and correctly disclose all transactions involved in their businesses; and all persons, firms, and corporations subject to such requirements shall, at all reasonable times, upon notice by a duly authorized representative of the Commissioner, afford such representative and any duly authorized representative of the secretary of agriculture of the United States accompanied by such representative of the Commissioner access to their places of business and opportunity to examine the facilities, inventory, and records thereof, to copy all such records, and to take reasonable samples of their inventory upon payment of the fair market value therefor:

- (1) Any persons, firms, or corporations that engage for commerce in the business of slaughtering any cattle, sheep, swine, nontradi-

tional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines or preparing, freezing, packaging, or labeling any carcasses, or parts or products of carcasses, of any such animals for use as human food or animal food;

(2) Any persons, firms, or corporations that engage in the business of buying or selling (as meat brokers, wholesalers, or otherwise) or transporting in commerce or storing in or for such commerce any carcasses, or parts or products of carcasses, of any such animals; and

(3) Any persons, firms, or corporations that engage in business as renderers or engage in the business of buying, selling, or transporting any dead, dying, disabled, or diseased cattle, sheep, swine, nontraditional livestock, rabbits, goats, horses, mules, or other equines, or parts of such carcasses.

(b) Any record required to be maintained by this Code section shall be maintained for such period of time as the Commissioner may by regulations prescribe.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 17; Ga. L. 1974, p. 453, § 1; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 28; Ga.

L. 1996, p. 1219, § 17; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 24/SB 364.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

3A C.J.S., Animals, §§ 238, 239. 36A C.J.S., Food, § 15.

26-2-133. Identification of carcasses, meat, or meat food products not intended for human use.

No person, firm, or corporation shall buy, sell, transport, offer for sale or transportation, or receive for transportation any animal, carcasses, or parts thereof, meat, or meat food products of any such animals, which are not intended for use as human food unless they are denatured or otherwise identified as required by the regulations of the Commissioner or are naturally inedible by humans.

History.

Ga. L. 1969, p. 1028, § 16.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 24.

ARTICLE 4

ADVERTISEMENT AND SALE OF MEAT GENERALLY

Cross references.

Authority of Commissioner of Agriculture to impose penalty in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

False advertising generally, § 10-1-420 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Additional Regulations Applicable to

the Sale of Meat by Weight and Food Service Contracts, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-11-.01 et seq.

26-2-150. Legislative intent.

The General Assembly declares that purchasers and consumers have a right to expect and demand honesty and fair practices in the sale of meat for human consumption. It is the purpose of this Code section and Code Sections 26-2-151 through 26-2-154 to ensure that honest, fair, and ethical practices are followed in the advertising and sale of meat for human consumption and to authorize the Commissioner of Agriculture to take all actions necessary to ensure that such practices are followed. The General Assembly views with alarm the fact that misleading and false advertising and sales tactics have been used in the sale of meat to Georgia consumers. It is to stop these practices that the General Assembly has enacted this Code section and Code Sections 26-2-151 through 26-2-154. The consumer has a right to know what he is buying and the true cost of the meat which he is purchasing for consumption.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 1030, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, § 4. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 10, 21.

26-2-151. Promulgation of rules and regulations regarding deceptive advertising of meat.

The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to promulgate and adopt rules and regulations necessary or convenient to carry out Code Section 26-2-150, this Code section, and Code Sections 26-2-152 through 26-2-154 and to prevent the deceptive advertising of meat.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 1030, § 4; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3 et seq., 7 et seq., 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 5.

26-2-152. Advertisement or sale of beef, pork, and lamb; “bait and switch” advertising.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation to advertise, sell, or offer for sale any carcass cuts of beef, pork, or lamb without prominently disclosing the price per pound of such beef, pork, or lamb in all such advertisements or on the packaging or display case in which the meat is displayed or offered for sale. This Code section shall not apply to the sale of beef, pork, or lamb when sold for immediate consumption on the premises or where sold as an unpackaged, cooked food or where sold for purposes other than for human consumption.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation to employ “bait and switch” advertising or sales techniques in connection with the sale of beef, pork, or lamb or to use any other advertising or sales technique which is calculated to deceive, or which in fact deceives, purchasers of beef, pork, or lamb as to what they are purchasing or its quality or quantity. “Bait and switch” as used in this subsection shall mean, but shall not be limited to, the advertising of products with the intent not to sell the products as advertised; or advertising products with the intent not to supply reasonably expected public demand, unless the advertisement discloses a limitation of quantity; or advertising a product which by accepted standards is inferior, with the expectation of switching the consumer to a product of accepted standard at a higher price.

(c)(1) As used in this subsection the term:

(A) “Animal” means any animal, including cattle, swine, sheep, goats, fish, and poultry, including eggs, raised for the production of an edible product or products intended for human consumption. The term also includes “game animals” as such term is defined in Code Section 27-1-2.

(B) “Food” means articles used or processed for human consumption and components of any such articles.

(2) It shall be unlawful for any person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation to label, advertise, or otherwise represent any food produced or sold in this state as meat or any product from an animal unless each product is clearly labeled by displaying the following terms prominently and conspicuously on the front of the

package, labeling cell cultured products with “lab-grown,” “lab-created,” or “grown in a lab” and plant based products as “vegetarian,” “veggie,” “vegan,” “plant based,” or other similar term indicating that the product is plant based and does not include the flesh, offal, or other by-product of any part of the carcass of a live animal that has been slaughtered.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 1030, § 2; Ga. L. 2020, p. 303, § 1/SB 211.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

37 Am. Jur. 2d, Fraud and Deceit, § 83.

Trade-Marks, Trade-Names, and Unfair Competition, §§ 179, 180.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq. 87 C.J.S.,

26-2-153. Sale of partial or whole carcasses.

It shall be unlawful for any person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation to advertise, sell, or offer for sale any quarter, half, three-quarters, or whole animal carcass for use as food for human consumption without disclosing in such advertisement and to the purchaser at the time of sale the minimum number of pounds of retail cuts contained in such quarter, half, three-quarters, or whole animal carcass. In determining the minimum number of pounds of red meat from such carcass, the person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation shall refer to currently effective United States Department of Agriculture charts and tables of yield grades.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 1030, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 21, 46.

26-2-154. Penalty for violation of Code Sections 26-2-150 through 26-2-153.

Any person, partnership, firm, company, or corporation violating the provisions of Code Sections 26-2-150 through 26-2-153 or any rule or regulation adopted by the Commissioner of Agriculture pursuant to Code Sections 26-2-150 through 26-2-153 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1974, p. 1030, § 5.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation

of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

26-2-155. Food service establishment display of information if serving imported beef.

(a) All food service establishments in this state, as defined in Code Section 26-2-370, which serve carcass beef, or cuts derived from such carcass, imported from a foreign country, shall conspicuously display or attach to their menus the words: "We serve beef imported from a foreign country."

(b) Any person, firm, or corporation who violates this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 917, §§ 1, 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq. 87 C.J.S., Trade-Marks, Trade-Names, and Unfair Competition, §§ 179, 180.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

26-2-156. Slaughter of horses for human consumption or other purposes.

(a) No person, partnership, association, corporation, or firm shall slaughter a horse in this state for the purpose of selling or offering for sale for human consumption or for other than human consumption the horse meat derived from such slaughtered animal unless:

(1) Such horse shall have remained on the business premises for at least four consecutive days prior to its slaughter;

(2) The vehicle license plate number and state of issue of any motor vehicle and any trailer used to transport such horse to the business premises is recorded and retained at such premises;

(3) An identifying description of such horse is maintained at such premises;

(4) The person delivering or selling the horse or horses is identi-

fied by his driver's license number and address and said number is recorded on the bill of sale; and

(5) Satisfactory records, pursuant to rules and regulations of the Department of Agriculture, are kept to show information required in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subsection.

(b) Any person, partnership, association, corporation, or firm violating this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1979, p. 846, §§ 1, 3.

Cross references.

Labeling and preparation of carcasses, meat, and meat food products of equines, mules, and other animals, § 26-2-111.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Separation of slaughter and prepara-

tion establishments, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry Inspection, Meat Inspection - Meat Processing, Rule 40-10-1-.06.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 9, 10, 19, 41, 59 et seq.

26-2-157. Signage and label required for sale of horse meat.

No horse meat shall be sold or offered for sale in this state for human consumption unless at the place of sale there shall be posted in a conspicuous location a sign bearing the words "HORSE MEAT FOR SALE." No sausage, ground meat, canned, or processed meat containing horse meat shall be sold for human consumption unless the package bears a label stating the proportionate amount of horse meat contained therein and unless there is likewise kept and maintained in a conspicuous place a sign showing that the meat offered for sale contains horse meat.

History.

Ga. L. 1943, p. 475, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 23, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 21, 41.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring notice by label or otherwise of the fact that

product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

Validity and construction of statutes,

ordinances, or regulations concerning the sale of horse meat for human consumption, 19 A.L.R.2d 1013.

26-2-158. Disclosure required for sale of horse meat.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to sell horse meat in any form for human consumption unless the person, firm, or corporation selling the meat shall inform the purchaser thereof at the time of sale that the purchaser is obtaining horse meat.

History.

Ga. L. 1943, p. 475, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 23, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances relating to in-

spection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

Validity and construction of statutes, ordinances, or regulations concerning the sale of horse meat for human consumption, 19 A.L.R.2d 1013.

26-2-159. Promulgation of regulations.

The Department of Agriculture is authorized to promulgate proper regulations for the carrying out of Code Sections 26-2-157 and 26-2-158, this Code section, and Code Sections 26-2-160 and 26-2-161 and to assist prosecuting attorneys in the enforcement thereof.

History.

Ga. L. 1943, p. 475, § 4; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

2003, "Code Sections" was inserted preceding "26-2-157 and 26-2-158" near the middle of this Code section.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3 et seq., 7 et seq., 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14.

ALR.

Validity and construction of statutes, ordinances, or regulations concerning the sale of horse meat for human consumption, 19 A.L.R.2d 1013.

26-2-160. Sale of dog meat restricted; packaging and label requirements.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to distribute or offer for sale for human consumption any dog meat in the State of Georgia; and all dog meat sold in this state for any purpose, other than human consumption, shall be sold in packages only. The packages shall

carry a label showing the contents, for what use it is intended, and stating that said contents are “NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.” The words “not for human consumption” shall be in conspicuous type.

History.

Ga. L. 1943, p. 475, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 24, 38 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring notice by label or otherwise of the fact that

product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

26-2-161. Penalty for violations of Code Section 26-2-157, 26-2-158, 26-2-159, or 26-2-160.

Any person, firm, or corporation violating the terms of Code Section 26-2-157, 26-2-158, 26-2-159, or 26-2-160 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof shall be fined an amount not exceeding \$1,000.00 or imprisoned for a period not exceeding 12 months, or both, at the discretion of the court.

History.

Ga. L. 1943, p. 475, § 5; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

Validity and construction of statutes, ordinances, or regulations concerning the sale of horse meat for human consumption, 19 A.L.R.2d 1013.

Recovery of cumulative statutory penalties, 71 A.L.R.2d 986.

ARTICLE 5**ANIMALS SUSPECTED OF BEARING ANY RESIDUE CAUSING CONTAMINATED MEAT****Cross references.**

Authority of Commissioner of Agricul-

ture to impose penalty in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

26-2-180. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

- (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture.
- (2) "Contaminate" means to cause the loss of wholesomeness for human consumption.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 1.

26-2-181. Promulgation of rules and regulations.

The Commissioner is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to govern the sampling and inspection of animals, poultry, and products quarantined or detained pursuant to this article and to implement and enforce this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 5.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Infection and Contagious Diseases, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Animal Health Division, Rule 40-13-4-.01 et seq.

Control and Eradication of Infection or Contagious Diseases, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Animal Health Division, Poultry, Rule 40-13-10-.07.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 7, 11, 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 10, 12.

26-2-182. Inspection and quarantine of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination.

- (a) The Commissioner or his duly authorized representative is authorized to inspect and quarantine or detain upon the premises where found any animals, poultry, or animal and poultry products suspected of bearing or containing a residue of any pesticide, insecticide, herbicide, drug, or any substance that would cause the resultant meat or product to be deemed contaminated.
- (b) Notice of the quarantine or detention shall be given to the owners or keepers of said animals, poultry, or products and to the owners or operators of the premises where the suspected contaminated matter is found.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 2.

Cross references.

Quarantine and inspection duties of

Commissioner pertaining to prevention of spread of parasitic livestock diseases, § 4-4-60 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 7, 11, 19, 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 15, 23, 24, 52.

26-2-183. Duration of quarantine or detention of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination.

All animals, poultry, or animal and poultry products suspected of bearing or containing a contaminating residue shall be quarantined or detained at the premises where found until sufficient sampling conducted under the authority of the Commissioner has been completed to determine that the resultant meat or product is wholesome and fit for human consumption. No such animal, poultry, or product shall be moved from quarantine or detention except by order of the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 19, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 20, 23, 24.

26-2-184. Orders for destruction of animals, poultry, or products suspected of contamination; compliance with federal tolerances.

If animals, poultry, or animal and poultry products quarantined or detained contain such contaminating residue that remains in excess of a safe level for human consumption, the Commissioner is authorized to order the animals, poultry, or animal and poultry products to be destroyed in a manner prescribed for the particular contaminating residue. Tolerances established by the United States Food and Drug Administration shall be complied with in enforcing this and other Code sections of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 58.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 23.

26-2-185. Injunctions.

In addition to the remedies provided in this article and notwithstanding the existence of any other remedy at law and notwithstanding the

pendency of any criminal prosecution, the Commissioner is authorized to apply to the superior courts of this state for injunctive relief. Such courts shall have the jurisdiction, upon hearing and for cause shown, to grant a temporary or permanent injunction or ex parte restraining order enjoining or restraining the violation or continuation of a violation of this article or for the failure or refusal to comply with this article or any rule or regulation promulgated under this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 52.

26-2-186. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article or the rules and regulations promulgated under this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1976, p. 335, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ARTICLE 6

MEAT, POULTRY, AND DAIRY PROCESSING PLANTS

Cross references.

Authority of Commissioner of Agriculture to impose penalty in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

Hatchery operators and dealers, § 4-7-1 et seq.

Regulation of sanitary conditions of meat, poultry, and dairy processing plants, § 26-2-200 et seq.

26-2-200. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

- (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture.
- (2) "Meat" or "meat products" means the carcass or part of any carcass of any animal or fowl or any by-product thereof in any form.
- (3) "Meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant" means: any abattoir, slaughterhouse, poultry killing or processing plant, milk depot, milk processing plant, or any other establishment for the killing, storage, dressing, manufacture, preparation, or processing of any animal,

fowl, or dairy product or any by-product thereof for human consumption.

(4) "Person" means any person, firm, corporation, or association of persons, or combination thereof.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 1.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1910, § 2119 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Slaughter houses are subject to sanitary regulations. *Schoen Bros. v. Pylant*, 162 Ga. 565, 134 S.E. 304, 1926 Ga.

LEXIS 239 (1926) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2119, subdivision (3)).

Wildlife club which processed meat and game for the club's members was a "meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant" within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § 26-2-200(3). *Aaron v. Irvin*, 259 Ga. 353, 381 S.E.2d 35, 1989 Ga. LEXIS 316 (1989).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Definition of private processing plants which must have licenses. — License is necessary for the operation of a meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant in this state where livestock is grown or fed out, slaughtered and sold for human consumption by the owner. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 1.

Includes private dairies. — Places manufacturing dairy products such as frozen desserts, which include ice cream, frozen custard, ice milk, milk sherbet, and

similar products containing milk or milk by-products are subject to licensure. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 1.

State-owned ice cream parlor not "dairy" requiring license. — State Park Authority, created as a body corporate and politic and deemed to be an instrumentality of the state and a public corporation, is not required to obtain a dairy processing plant license to operate an ice cream parlor. 1958-59 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 5.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Seller's duty to ascertain at his peril

that articles of food conform to food regulations, 28 A.L.R. 1385.

26-2-201. Supervision and control of sanitary conditions in dairies and meat, poultry, and dairy processing plants; designation of inspectors.

(a) The Commissioner shall have supervision and control over the sanitary conditions of all dairies and meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants in this state.

(b) The Commissioner shall maintain an adequate system of inspection and shall employ or designate qualified personnel to assist in the administration of this article. He shall fix the compensation of all personnel employed by him.

(c) The Commissioner is also vested with the authority to designate licensed veterinarians and city or county health authorities as inspectors as he deems advisable.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 1; Code 1933,

§§ 42-401, 42-402; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748,

§§ 2, 10.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1910, § 2119 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Slaughter houses are subject to sanitary regulations. Schoen Bros. v. Pylant, 162 Ga. 565, 134 S.E. 304, 1926 Ga. LEXIS 239 (1926) (decided under former Code 1910, § 2119, subdivision (3)).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Milk processor who sells only to military installation still subject to state sanitary regulations. — Person operating a milk processing plant in this state which is not a part of or in conjunction with a military installation of the United States in this state is subject to the sanitary regulations and jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture, even if the person processes only for sales to military

installations. 1960-61 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 4.

Penalty. — Whether violation of provisions of former Code 1933, § 42-406 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-212) could be punished as for misdemeanor as provided for in former Code 1933, § 42-9908 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-215) was questionable. 1960-61 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 396.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 12, 31, 37.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14, 19, 28 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80 A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Power to prescribe the manner or conditions under which a slaughterhouse shall serve the public, 46 A.L.R. 1486.

Validity of municipal ordinance imposing requirements on outside producers of milk to be sold in city, 14 A.L.R.2d 103.

26-2-202. Promulgation of rules and regulations.

(a) The Commissioner is authorized to adopt rules and regulations to carry out this article.

(b) The Commissioner shall adopt sanitary standards and specifications that are not less than those recognized and approved by the United States Department of Agriculture or the United States Department of Health and Human Services for like products and premises.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 1; Code 1933,
§ 42-401; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3 et seq., 7 et
seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 5.

26-2-203. Power of inspection.

In the performance of his duties, the Commissioner or any of his duly authorized representatives is authorized to enter and inspect, at any reasonable time, any dairy, or any meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant, or any vehicle where any dairy, animal, or poultry product, any by-product thereof, or any part thereof is held, stored, transported, or offered for sale.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 3; Code 1933, § 42-403; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 8; Ga. L.
2003, p. 140, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to

milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80
A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R.
644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Power to prescribe the manner or con-
ditions under which a slaughterhouse
shall serve the public, 46 A.L.R. 1486.

26-2-204. Inspection of dairies and meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants; right to take and test samples.

The Commissioner shall cause to be inspected at such times as he may deem proper each dairy and each meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant within this state. He shall require the correction of all unsanitary conditions found therein. He may take samples of dairy, poultry, or meat products or parts or portions thereof and cause them to be analyzed or tested by the state chemist. Such analyses or test records shall be preserved by the Commissioner and when sworn to by the state chemist shall be prima-facie evidence of violations of this article, rules and regulations, or standards or specifications adopted pursuant to this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 3; Code 1933,
§ 42-403; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 7, 12, 31,
49, 69.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 20, 58.

26-2-205. Wholesomeness inspection of meat, poultry, and dairy products offered for sale; inspection of livestock slaughtered; marking system for inspection purposes.

The Commissioner is authorized to adopt and maintain an adequate system of wholesomeness inspection as to all meat, poultry, or dairy products offered for sale in this state. He shall be authorized to employ or designate qualified personnel necessary to maintain such inspection program. The Commissioner is authorized to require an ante mortem and post-mortem inspection of all livestock slaughtered by licensees under this article for sale as food in this state. He shall be authorized to adopt an appropriate marking system so as to identify those carcasses of animals inspected and passed as fit for human consumption. The Commissioner is authorized to adopt standards and specifications for meat, poultry, and dairy products and the processing thereof. Nothing contained in this Code section shall be applicable to any person slaughtering livestock or poultry or processing meat, poultry, or dairy products for home consumption.

History.

Ga. L. 1959, p. 168, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 7, 12, 31,
37.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 21.

26-2-206. Wholesomeness inspection of meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants on cost basis or less.

The Commissioner is authorized to make the wholesomeness inspection provided in Code Section 26-2-205 available to meat, poultry, or dairy processing plants licensed under this article on the basis of actual costs. He is further authorized when sufficient funds are available to make such service available without cost.

History.

Ga. L. 1959, p. 168, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 31.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

26-2-207. Sanitary condition of dairy equipment and premises; adequate supply and drainage of water.

No person shall operate a dairy within this state unless the equipment and premises shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Each dairy shall have an adequate supply of clean, pure water and an adequate supply of clean, hot water and adequate drainage of the premises.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 37.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 19, 28.

26-2-208. Sale, offer for sale, or possession of dairy, animal, or poultry products under conditions other than sanitary.

(a) No person, firm, or corporation shall sell, offer for sale, or have in his possession for sale any dairy, animal, or poultry product or any by-product thereof that has been produced, manufactured, transported, handled, stored, or processed under other than sanitary conditions.

(b) Conditions other than sanitary shall be deemed to exist where any or all of the following conditions exist:

- (1) Premises, buildings, handling or storage space, or equipment, in a state of decay;
- (2) Floors and side walls or other parts of any space of building covered or coated with decaying matter;
- (3) Sufficient insect screens not provided or maintained;
- (4) Insufficient drainage;
- (5) Inadequate supply of pure water;
- (6) Inadequate supply of hot water;
- (7) Any animal or fowl held on the premises in unsanitary lots, pens, or cages or fed uncooked animal offal; or
- (8) Where putrid odors exist.

(c) The enumeration of these conditions shall not be exclusive and the Commissioner shall determine whether unsanitary conditions exist.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 2; Code 1933, § 42-402; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 31 et seq., 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 21, 28 et seq.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application

of statutes or ordinances relating to inspection of food sold at retail, 127 A.L.R. 322.

Recovery for loss of business resulting from resale of unwholesome food or beverages furnished by another, 17 A.L.R.2d 1379.

26-2-209. Permanent license for meat processing plants.

To assure the protection of the consuming public, no person shall operate a meat processing plant in this state without having first obtained a permanent license from the Commissioner; provided, however, that any meat processing plant operating under a federal grant of inspection from the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service, shall be exempt from such license requirement. There shall be no fee for such license. The license shall be kept on file in each place of business. The license shall not be transferable. The Georgia Department of Agriculture may refuse to grant inspection, and any such license may be revoked or suspended by the Commissioner for the violation of this article or rules and regulations or sanitary standards and specifications adopted pursuant to this article. The Commissioner shall notify the licensee of the reasons why he or she intends to revoke or suspend the license, and the licensee shall be entitled to a hearing before the Commissioner within ten days after receipt of such notice of intention to revoke or suspend. At such hearing the Commissioner shall consider the circumstances and shall give the licensee reasonable time to correct the conditions or circumstances that caused the notice of intention to revoke or suspend the license to be given.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 5; Ga. L. 2007, p. 620, § 2/HB 433.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Wildlife club which processed meat and game for the club's members was a processing plant which was required to be

licensed under O.C.G.A. § 26-2-209. *Aaron v. Irvin*, 259 Ga. 353, 381 S.E.2d 35, 1989 Ga. LEXIS 316 (1989).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Operators of plants where livestock grown or prepared for human food must obtain license. — License is necessary for the operation of a meat, poultry, or dairy processing plant in this state where livestock is grown or fed out, slaughtered, and sold for human consumption by the owner. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 1.

Manufacturers of milk products, including frozen desserts. — Places manufacturing dairy products such as frozen desserts, which include ice cream,

frozen custard, ice milk, milk sherbet, and similar products containing milk or milk by-products are subject to licensure. 1957 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 1.

State Park Authority operating ice cream parlor. — State Park Authority, created as a body corporate and politic and deemed to be an instrumentality of the state and a public corporation, is not required to obtain a dairy processing plant license to operate an ice cream parlor. 1958-59 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 5.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 32, 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 18.

ALR.

Right of one who acquires title to, or

other interest in, real property to benefit of a license previously issued by the public, permitting use of property for a specified purpose, 131 A.L.R. 1339.

26-2-210. Permanent license for poultry processing plants.

To assure the protection of the consuming public, no person shall operate a poultry processing plant in this state without having first obtained a permanent license from the Commissioner; provided, however, that any poultry processing plant operating under a federal grant of inspection from the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service, shall be exempt from such license requirement. There shall be no fee for such license. The license shall be kept on file in each place of business. The license shall not be transferable. The Georgia Department of Agriculture may refuse to grant inspection, and any such license may be revoked or suspended by the Commissioner for the violation of this article or rules and regulations or sanitary standards and specifications adopted pursuant to this article. The Commissioner shall notify the licensee of the reasons why he or she intends to revoke or suspend the license, and the licensee shall be entitled to a hearing before the Commissioner within ten days after receipt of such notice of intention to revoke or suspend. At such hearing the Commissioner shall consider the circumstances and shall give the licensee reasonable time to correct the conditions or circumstances that caused the notice of intention to revoke or suspend the license to be given.

History.

Ga. L. 1970, p. 186, § 1; Ga. L. 2007, p. 620, § 3/HB 433.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Right of one who acquires title to, or other interest in, real property to benefit

of a license previously issued by the public, permitting use of property for a specified purpose, 131 A.L.R. 1339.

26-2-211. Statistics on animals and poultry slaughtered; maintenance of records.

The Commissioner shall maintain a system by which accurate statistics regarding the disposition of all animals or poultry slaughtered for human consumption in this state by licensees may be obtained. He shall require that each licensee maintain adequate records so as to ascertain the total number of animals or poultry slaughtered, processed, or disposed of and the amount of meat, poultry, or dairy products received or processed by him.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 4; Code 1933, § 42-405; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 9.

26-2-212. County and municipal ordinances dealing with meats, poultry, and dairy products.

Nothing in this article shall prevent the governing authority of any county or municipal corporation from adopting ordinances or resolutions providing for the inspection of meats, poultry, meat or poultry food products, and dairy products sold within its limits and to provide penalties for violation thereof; but no such ordinance or resolution shall conflict with any power or authority of the Commissioner or his representatives; provided, however, that no county or municipal corporation shall adopt sanitary standards or specifications that are less than those adopted by the Commissioner.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 148, § 5; Code 1933, § 42-406; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 10.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Violation of section might not be punishable as misdemeanor. — Whether a violation of the provisions of former Code 1933, § 42-406 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-212) could be punished

as for a misdemeanor as provided for in former Code 1933, § 42-9908 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-215) was questionable. 1960-61 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 396.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80

A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Validity of municipal ordinance impos-

ing requirements on outside producers of milk to be sold in city, 14 A.L.R.2d 103.

Dairy, creamery, or milk distributing plant, as nuisance, 92 A.L.R.2d 974.

26-2-213. Injunctions.

In addition to the remedies provided in this article and notwithstanding the existence of any remedy at law, the Commissioner is authorized to apply to the superior court and such court shall have jurisdiction upon hearing and for cause shown to grant a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or both, restraining any person from violating or continuing to violate this article or for failing or refusing to comply with the requirements of this article or any rule or regulation adopted by the Commissioner pursuant to this article. No ex parte restraining order shall be issued without bond.

History.

Ga. L. 1959, p. 168, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 52.

26-2-213.1. Applicability to individuals and entities governed by federal acts.

The requirements of this article shall apply to persons, firms, corporations, establishments, animals, and articles regulated under the Federal Meat Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. Section 601, et seq., or the Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. Section 451, et seq., only to the extent provided for in said federal acts. Consistent with said federal acts, the Commissioner may exercise concurrent jurisdiction with the secretary of agriculture of the United States and may enforce this article and any regulations promulgated pursuant thereto without regard to licensing agency.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-213.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 620, § 4/HB 433; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(5)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Federal Meat Inspection Act” for “federal Meat Inspection Act” and “Federal Poultry Products Inspection Act” for “federal Poultry Products Inspection Act” in the middle of the first sentence.

26-2-214. Inspection of federally inspected meat, poultry, or dairy products; exception for horse slaughter operations.

(a) This article shall in no way be construed to apply or require further inspection of meat, poultry, or dairy products in this state when

meat, poultry, or dairy products are required to be inspected by inspectors of the United States Department of Agriculture, provided the Georgia Department of Agriculture may inspect any business operations involving the slaughter of horses in this state for the purpose of selling or offering for sale the horse meat derived therefrom in order to enforce certain restrictions relating to such slaughter.

(b) Any person, partnership, association, corporation, or firm violating this Code section, including but not limited to refusing to permit an inspection authorized by this Code section, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1959, p. 168, § 4; Ga. L. 1979, p. 846, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 10 et seq., 31, 32, 37 et seq., 49 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 8, 19, 22.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

26-2-215. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article or rules and regulations adopted under this article or any sanitary standards or specifications adopted under this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1914, p. 134, § 2; Code 1933, § 42-9908; Ga. L. 1956, p. 748, § 11.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Penalty. — Whether a violation of the provisions of former Code 1933, § 42-406 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-212) could be punished as for a misdemeanor as pro-

vided for in former Code 1933, § 42-9908 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-215) was questionable. 1960-61 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 396.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or

mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

Recovery for loss of business resulting from resale of unwholesome food or beverages furnished by another, 17 A.L.R.2d 1379.

ARTICLE 7

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

Cross references.

Imposition of monetary penalty rather than suspension, § 2-2-10.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Sanitation, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-4-.01 et seq.

Dry Milk, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-6-.01 et seq.

Ice Cream - Standards and Requirements, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-7-.01 et seq.

Ice Cream, Frozen Desserts and Related Products Regulations and Enforcement,

Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-8-.01 et seq.

Ice Cream, Frozen Desserts and Related Products, Sanitation Standards, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-9-.01 et seq.

Milk Shake Definitions and Processing Standards, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-12-.01.

Pasteurized Milk Ordinance, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Milk and Milk Products, Rule 40-2-15-.01 et seq.

26-2-230. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Dairy Act of 1980.”

History.

Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14, 19.

ALR.

What amounts to sale of milk to “public”

within statutory regulations as to milk, 111 A.L.R. 725.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-231. Definitions.

(a) As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Georgia.

(2) “Cream tester” means any person who performs the act of sampling or testing milk, cream, or other dairy products, the test of which is to be used as a basis for making payment for said products.

(3) “Dairy manufacturing plants” means creameries, condenseries, public dairies, butter factories, cheese factories, ice cream factories, and other like factories, and any other concerns that manufacture dairy products for sale at either retail or wholesale; provided, however, that the term dairy manufacturing plant shall not include a retail frozen dessert packager which is otherwise permitted as a food service establishment pursuant to Article 13 of this chapter.

(4) “Department” means the Department of Agriculture of the State of Georgia.

(5) Reserved.

(6) Reserved.

(7) “Manufactured milk products” means those milk products, including condensed, evaporated, concentrated, sterilized, or powdered milk, made from raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes and processed in such a manner and under such conditions as to remove or sterilize, as far as is possible, any contaminated matter contained in the raw milk from which the products were manufactured, under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed to ensure that result.

(8) Reserved.

(9) Reserved.

(10) “Person” means any individual, partnership, firm, company, or corporation.

(11) “Public dairies” means any place where milk and cream are purchased from producers and sold or kept for sale, either at wholesale or retail.

(12) “Raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes” means fluid whole milk in its natural state from healthy cows, which milk has not been produced and handled in compliance with the requirements for Grade A milk.

(13) Reserved.

(14) “Ungraded milk” means all fluid whole milk in its natural state, which milk fails to meet the requirements of Grade A milk, raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes as defined in this article, or raw milk for human consumption, as provided for in Article 18 of this chapter.

(b) Unless otherwise defined in this article, the following words shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in the May, 2001, Amended Version of the Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance Recom-

mentations of the United States Public Health Service — Food and Drug Administration and supplements thereto:

- (1) “Grade A buttermilk”;
- (2) “Grade A chocolate milk”;
- (3) “Grade A milk, pasteurized”;
- (4) “Grade A modified solids milk”;
- (5) “Grade A skim milk”;
- (6) “Grade A whole milk”;
- (7) “Pasteurization”; and
- (8) “Raw cow’s milk.”

(c) Unless otherwise defined in this article, the following words shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in “Frozen Desserts,” 21 C.F.R. Sec. 135.3, 21 C.F.R. Sec. 135.110 — 135.160 (1979):

- (1) “Ice cream”;
- (2) “Frozen custard”;
- (3) Reserved;
- (4) “Sherbet”; and
- (5) “Water ices.”

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 2; Code 1933, § 42-502; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1937, p. 725, § 1; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, §§ 1, 3-5; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 2; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1279, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1291, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 815, § 2; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90; Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 3/HB 1175.

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, in paragraph (a)(14), substituted

“milk, raw whole” for “milk or raw whole” and added “, or raw milk for human consumption, as provided for in Article 18 of this chapter” at the end.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act.’”

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 17.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to

milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80 A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-232. Duties of Commissioner generally.

(a) The Commissioner is charged with the responsibility of enforcing this article.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Commissioner or his authorized representative:

(1) To inspect or cause to be inspected, as often as may be deemed practicable, all creameries, public dairies, condenseries, butter factories, cheese factories, ice cream factories, or any other places where dairy products are produced, manufactured, kept, handled, stored, or sold;

(2) To prohibit the production, sale, or distribution of unclean or unwholesome milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, or other dairy products;

(3) To condemn for food purposes all unclean or unwholesome dairy products, wherever found;

(4) To take samples anywhere of any dairy product or imitation thereof and cause the same to be analyzed or satisfactorily tested;

(5) To weigh and test milk, cream, and other dairy products for the purpose of ascertaining the percentage and weight of butterfat or other ingredients contained therein; provided, however, that it shall not be necessary for the Commissioner to perform the tests if they are being performed by an agency of the federal government;

(6) To inspect and make tests of any instrument or equipment used in the testing or measuring of milk, cream, or other dairy products; and

(7) To compile and publish in print or electronically annually, or at such shorter intervals as he may desire, statistics and information concerning all phases of the dairy industry in this state.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, §§ 1, 19; Code 1933, §§ 42-501, 42-503; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167,

§ 2; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, § 9; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 3; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, Ch.

42-5 and § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Constitutionality of milk regulations. — Production, distribution and sale of milk to the general public is a business that vitally affects the public, and therefore subject to legislative control and regulation. *Bohannon v. Duncan*, 185 Ga. 840, 196 S.E. 897, 1938 Ga. LEXIS 552 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 42-5).

Purpose of section to protect health and prevent fraud. — Purpose of former Code 1933, §§ 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-230, 26-2-231, 26-2-233), was to fix standards of sanitation in the production, handling, distribution, and marketing of milk and milk products, to protect the health of the consumers of milk and milk products, and to prevent fraud and deception in the marketing of such products by assuring that labels affixed to or printed on con-

tainers reveal the exact nature of the product. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511).

Limitations on commissioner's authority under section. — Nothing contained in former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-232 and 26-2-233) authorized the commissioner to do more by rule and regulation than define and set standards for all milk and milk products, and to approve labels to be affixed to or printed upon the containers in which such products are offered for sale. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 6, 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to

milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80 A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-233. Promulgation and amendment of rules and regulations by Commissioner.

(a) The Commissioner shall have the power to adopt, amend, and repeal rules and regulations to implement and enforce this article; provided, however, that all rules and regulations shall be of uniform application; and provided, further, that all rules and regulations shall be adopted, amended, or repealed in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." The rules and regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Rules and regulations to provide for the labeling of milk and milk products in such manner so as to indicate that the milk or milk product complies with this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article;

(2) Rules and regulations to prescribe the specifications of all glassware, including, but not limited to, bottles, pipettes, test tubes, and burrettes, and such other instruments as may be used in the testing of milk, cream, or other dairy products; and

(3) Rules and regulations to prescribe the specifications for the installation and operation of recording thermometers on bulk farm tanks.

(b) The Commissioner may include as a part of such rules and regulations the adoption of supplements to and changes in the "Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance" referred to in Code Section 26-2-238.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 19; Code 1933, § 42-501; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L.

1961, p. 501, § 14; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 5; Ga. L. 1983, p. 737, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 26.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 42-5 and § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Constitutionality of milk regulations. — Production, distribution, and sale of milk to the general public is a business that vitally affects the public, and therefore is subject to legislative control and regulation. *Bohannon v. Duncan*, 185 Ga. 840, 196 S.E. 897, 1938 Ga. LEXIS 552 (1938) (decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 42-5).

Purpose of section to protect health and prevent fraud. — Purpose of former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-232, 26-2-233, 26-2-242) was to fix standards of sanitation in the production, handling, distribution and marketing of milk and milk products, to protect the health of the consumers of milk and milk products, and

to prevent fraud and deception in the marketing of such products by assuring that labels affixed to or printed on containers reveal the exact nature of the product. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

Limitations on commissioner's authority under section. — Nothing contained in former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-231, 26-2-233) authorized the commissioner to do more by rule and regulation than define and set standards for milk and milk products, and to approve labels to be affixed to or printed upon the containers in which such products were offered for sale. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 49 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to

milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80 A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-234. Licensure procedure.

Application for all licenses and permits provided for in this article shall be made to the Commissioner on such forms as he or she may prescribe. All licenses shall be valid for a period of one year unless revoked or suspended as provided in this article. All licenses shall be

renewable upon submission of all required application forms. The Commissioner may deny, refuse, suspend, or revoke any license, after notice and a hearing, for any violation of or failure to comply with this article or the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder; provided, however, that the hearing shall be held in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1933, § 42-606, enacted by Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, § 11; Ga. L. 1972, p. 947,

§ 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 6; Ga. L. 2007, p. 103, § 1/HB 112.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 42, 43.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 18.

ALR.

What amounts to sale of milk to “public”

within statutory regulations as to milk, 111 A.L.R. 725.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-235. Cream tester license.

No person shall act as a cream tester unless he or she is licensed, and it shall be unlawful for any person to employ as a cream tester any person who does not have a license to operate testing apparatus for milk and cream. The license shall be posted in a conspicuous place in plain view of all persons entering the room in which all testing is done.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 4; Code 1933, § 42-505; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L.

1980, p. 981, § 7; Ga. L. 2007, p. 103, § 2/HB 112.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 37, 42.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 28 et seq.

ALR.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-236. [Reserved] License requirements — Operators of milk and cream buying stations.**History.**

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 14; Code 1933, § 42-515; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 8; repealed by Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 2, effective July 1, 1999.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 2 repealed and reserved this Code section, effective July 1, 1999.

26-2-237. [Reserved] License requirements — Milk and cream brokers.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 15; Code 1933, § 42-520; Ga. L. 1937, p. 725, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 9; repealed by Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 3, effective July 1, 1999.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 3 repealed and reserved this Code section, effective July 1, 1999.

26-2-238. Standards and requirements generally.

The standards and requirements of the May, 2005, Amended Version of the Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance Recommendations of the United States Public Health Service — Food and Drug Administration and supplements thereto, except as otherwise provided in this article, are expressly adopted as the standards and requirements for this state. Future changes in and supplements to said milk ordinance may be adopted by the Commissioner as a part of the standards and requirements for this state.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 8; Code 1933, § 42-509; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 10; Ga. L. 1983, p. 737, § 2; Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 4;

Ga. L. 2000, p. 1291, § 2; Ga. L. 2002, p. 815, § 3; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26; Ga. L. 2004, p. 457, § 1; Ga. L. 2006, p. 178, § 1/SB 441.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 42 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 21.

ALR.

Constitutionality of regulations as to

milk, 42 A.L.R. 556; 58 A.L.R. 672; 80 A.L.R. 1225; 101 A.L.R. 64; 110 A.L.R. 644; 119 A.L.R. 243; 155 A.L.R. 1383.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-239. Standards and requirements for frozen desserts generally.

The standards and requirements for standardized frozen desserts, specifically ice cream, frozen custard, sherbet, and water ices, as adopted by the Food and Drug Administration of the United States Department of Health and Human Services and contained in "Frozen Desserts," 21 C.F.R. Sec. 135.3, 21 C.F.R. Sec. 135.110 — 135.160 (1979), except as otherwise provided, are expressly adopted as the standards and requirements for this state.

History.

Code 1933, § 42-612, enacted by Ga. L.

1980, p. 981, § 12; Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 5.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annota-

tions decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 42-5 and § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501

are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Purpose of section to protect health and prevent fraud. — Purpose of former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-230, 26-2-231, 26-2-233) was to fix standards of sanitation in the production, handling, distribution, and marketing of milk and milk products, to protect the health of the

consumers of milk and milk products, and to prevent fraud and deception in the marketing of such products by assuring that labels affixed to or printed on containers reveal the exact nature of the product. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 42, 46.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 28 et seq.

ALR.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-240. Adulterated ice cream.

(a) Ice cream shall be deemed to be adulterated:

(1) If it contains any preservative, mineral, or other substance or compound deleterious to health; provided, however, that this Code section shall not be construed to prohibit the use of harmless coloring matter when not used for fraudulent purposes;

(2) If it contains any fats other than milk fat or any oils or paraffin added to, blended with, or compounded with it; provided, however, that chocolate ice cream and the chocolate coating of coated ice cream may contain cocoa butter; or

(3) If it is made, in whole or in part, from any milk product which is unfit for consumption as food.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, offer or expose for sale, or have in possession with intent to sell or offer or expose for sale under the name of "ice cream" any product or substance deemed adulterated under subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 11; Code 1933,

§ 42-512; Ga. L. 1965, p. 498, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 13.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 20, 46.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 23, 28 et seq.

ALR.

Preservative as adulterant within statute in relation to food, 50 A.L.R. 76.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances relating specifically to ice cream or other frozen milk products, 111 A.L.R. 112.

26-2-241. Testing of milk, cream, or other dairy products.

In determining the value of milk, cream, or other dairy products by the use of the Babcock test, it shall be unlawful to give any false reading or in any way manipulate the test so as to give a higher or lower percent of butterfat than the milk, cream, or other dairy products actually contain, or to cause any inaccuracy in reading the percent of butterfat by securing from any quantity of milk, cream, or other dairy products to be tested an inaccurate sample for the test. None other than the Babcock method, or such method of testing as may be approved by the Commissioner, may be employed when testing milk or cream, the test of which is to be used as a basis for making payment for the milk or cream thus tested. None other than the torsion balanced scales, or such scales as may be approved by the Commissioner, may be used when weighing cream for testing, when the tests are to be used as a basis for making payment for cream. It shall be unlawful to use adjustable scale weights in determining the weight of cream used in the Babcock test. Only such centrifuge shall be used as shall meet the approval of the Commissioner. Specifications for apparatus and chemicals and directions for testing milk and cream must conform to *Standard Methods for the Examination of Dairy Products*, with such additions as shall be deemed advisable by the Commissioner to make them conform to this article. All test tubes, bottles, pipettes, burettes, or instruments used in connection with testing or determining the value of milk, cream, or other dairy products by the use of the Babcock test must be United States government standard and shall be approved by the Commissioner. All milk and cream tests shall be maintained at a temperature of 135 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit for at least three minutes before the reading of the percent of butterfat shall be made and recorded. In reading cream tests, glymol or its equivalent must be used, and the samples under test must be held for three minutes in a water bath extending up as high on the graduated neck as the sample itself does.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 3; Code 1933, § 42-504; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1951, p. 444, § 1; Ga. L. 1957, p. 628, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 11; Ga. L. 1999, p. 638, § 6.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1999, "burettes" was substituted for "burettes" in the seventh sentence.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 12, 37 et seq., 57.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 19, 20, 28 et seq.

ALR.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-242. Standards and requirements for sale of milk and milk products.

(a) Milk and milk products which are in compliance with this article and in compliance with the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this article may be sold, offered for sale, or delivered to the consuming public for the purpose of human consumption, provided the container in which the milk or milk product is sold, offered for sale, or delivered has affixed thereto or printed thereon labels approved by the Commissioner. No milk or milk product may be sold, offered for sale, or delivered for the purpose of human consumption if it is not in compliance with this article or the standards or rules and regulations prescribed pursuant to this article unless such product complies with the standards and requirements of Article 18 of this chapter and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

(b) The sale, offering for sale, or delivery of ungraded milk is prohibited except as provided in Article 18 of this chapter.

(c) No raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes may be offered for sale in this state to anyone except processors and manufacturers properly licensed and inspected to manufacture and process manufactured milk products.

(d) It shall be unlawful to sell, keep for sale, or offer for sale any condensed or evaporated milk, concentrated milk, sweetened condensed milk, sweetened evaporated milk, sweetened concentrated milk, sweetened evaporated skimmed milk, or any of the fluid derivatives of any of them, to which shall have been added any fat or oil other than milk fat, either under the name of the products or articles or the derivatives thereof, or under any fictitious or trade name whatsoever.

History.

Code 1933, § 42-614, enacted by Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, §§ 6, 7; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 14; Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 4/HB 1175.

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, added “unless such product complies with the standards and requirements of Article 18 of this chapter and the rules and regulations promulgated there-

under” at the end of subsection (a) and added “except as provided in Article 18 of this chapter” at the end of subsection (b).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act.’”

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Purpose of section to protect health and prevent fraud. — Purpose of former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p.

501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-232, 26-2-233) was to fix standards of sanitation in the production, handling, distribution, and marketing of milk and milk products, to protect the health of the consumers of milk and milk products, and to prevent fraud and deception in the marketing of such products by assuring that labels af-

fixed to or printed on containers reveal the exact nature of the product. Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc., 224

Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 28 et seq., 38 et seq.

26-2-243. Intermingling of Grade A milk or milk products with other grades.

(a) It is the intent and purpose of this Code section to prohibit the intermingling of Grade A milk and Grade A milk products with milk and milk products other than Grade A.

(b) No person producing, handling, processing, manufacturing, or dealing in milk or milk products, which person produces, receives, distributes, or in any manner handles Grade A raw whole milk, Grade A pasteurized whole milk, or Grade A milk products, shall receive, store, handle, distribute, or otherwise allow raw milk for human consumption or raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes to be introduced upon the premises where the operations are conducted. At all times, such person shall be subject to inspection by the Commissioner and shall hold a Grade A permit, issued by the Commissioner, to deal in Grade A milk and Grade A milk products and shall conduct business pursuant to the laws of this state and the rules and regulations of the Commissioner made thereunder, to the end that milk products shall be handled only in the manner provided for in this article and that inferior quality milk not be sold to the consuming public as superior quality milk.

(c) No person producing, handling, processing, manufacturing, or dealing in milk or milk products, which person produces, receives, distributes, or in any manner handles raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes, shall introduce any Grade A raw whole milk, Grade A pasteurized milk, or Grade A milk products for other than manufacturing purposes upon the premises where manufactured milk products operations are conducted. At all times such persons shall be subject to inspection by the Commissioner and shall hold a manufacturing permit, issued by the Commissioner, to deal in manufactured milk products and shall conduct business pursuant to the laws of this state and the rules and regulations of the Commissioner made thereunder, to the end that grades of milk shall be handled only in the manner provided for in this article and that inferior quality milk not be sold to the consuming public as superior quality milk.

(d) The prohibitions contained in subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section shall not be applicable where separate systems and other facilities are provided to maintain the separation and identity of the various grades and types of milk.

(e) After making inspections or conducting appropriate tests, if the Commissioner determines that any law, rule, or regulation has been violated or if he has reason to believe that any of the milk or milk products enumerated in subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section are dangerous for human consumption, the Commissioner, after notice, is authorized to place one or more inspectors on such premises upon a 24 hour basis for such a period of time as he deems necessary to satisfy himself that the laws and rules and regulations are being complied with. The cost of the inspection, to be fixed by the Commissioner at a cost not to exceed the actual cost of the inspection, shall be paid by such person to the Commissioner as a condition to the continued validity of the permit or the license under which the business is operated. The inspection charges provided in this subsection may be terminated by a request to the Commissioner for a hearing within two days after a charge of violation or the placing of the inspectors in the plant. Upon hearing and for cause shown, the Commissioner is authorized to impose the cost of inspection as a part of the penalty imposed. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit the Commissioner from revoking or canceling any permit or license of any person doing business in this state who violates any of the laws of this state or the regulations made pursuant thereto.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 19; Code 1933, § 42-501; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, § 11; Ga. L. 1978, p. 1988, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 15; Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 5/HB 1175.

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, inserted “raw milk for human

consumption or” in the first sentence in subsection (b).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act.’”

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 42-5 and § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Purpose of section to protect health and prevent fraud. — Purpose of former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 26-2-232, 26-2-233, 26-2-239), was to fix standards of sanitation in the production, handling,

distribution, and marketing of milk and milk products, to protect the health of the consumers of milk and milk products, and to prevent fraud and deception in the marketing of such products by assuring that labels affixed to or printed on containers reveal the exact nature of the product. *Department of Agric. v. Quality Food Prods., Inc.*, 224 Ga. 585, 163 S.E.2d 704, 1968 Ga. LEXIS 856 (1968) (decided under former Code 1933, § 42-511 and Ga. L. 1961, p. 501).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 28 et seq.

26-2-244. Standards and conditions for importation of milk and milk products.

(a) No milk or milk products for human consumption shall be shipped into this state from any other state unless such milk or milk product is produced and handled under sanitary conditions no less adequate for the protection of public health and welfare than the conditions under which milk and milk products are produced, handled, and marketed in this state, and then not until authorization for the shipping of milk or milk products has been issued by the Commissioner after careful investigation; provided, however, that shippers listed on the interstate milk shippers list shall be deemed to be in compliance with this Code section.

(b) Any applicant who is not listed on the interstate milk shippers list but who desires to ship milk or milk products into this state shall furnish certified copies of all laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the sanitary standards in force in the area where the product which he wishes to bring into this state is produced, processed, handled, and sold, together with certified copies of any and all licenses, permits, certificates, test results, and inspection reports pertaining to the production, processing, marketing, handling, and sale of the milk or milk products. If the Commissioner finds that the milk or milk product is produced, processed, marketed, and handled under sanitary conditions no less adequate than those applicable in this state, he may authorize the shipping of the milk or milk product into this state. If the applicant is unable to comply with this subsection, he may request an inspection under subsection (c) of this Code section.

(c) Upon application from a person who desires authorization to ship any milk or milk product into this state and upon the payment by the person of the amount of actual expense necessary to make an inspection, the Commissioner shall cause an inspection to be made. If, upon inspection, the requirements of this article and the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder are found to be met, the Commissioner shall authorize the shipment of the milk or milk product.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 20; Code 1933, § 42-518; Ga. L. 1937, p. 725, § 1; Ga. L.

1961, p. 501, § 12; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 17.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Milk import permit deniable only when milk unsanitary or when importer cannot show equal sanitary standards. — Permits for the importation into Georgia of milk or milk products may be denied by the Commissioner of

Agriculture only when the applicant for such permit cannot show that the sanitary standards for the product in force where it is produced and processed are as adequate as such standards in this state, or when an inspection of the proposed shipment

discloses that it does not conform to the sanitary standards of this state; such permits may not be denied solely to protect

domestic producers from foreign competition. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-202.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 8, 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 28 et seq.

26-2-245. **Condemnation and coloring of milk and milk products produced, processed, or delivered in violation of laws of state.**

Any milk or milk product shipped into this state or produced, processed, or delivered in this state in violation of the laws of this state or the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner pursuant thereto shall be condemned by the Commissioner and may be rendered unfit for marketing by the addition of a pyoktanin solution or other approved harmless coloring matter to notify the consuming public that the milk or milk product is ungraded and unfit for human consumption.

History.

Code 1933, § 42-618, enacted by Ga. L.

1937, p. 725, § 1; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, § 8; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 18.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Milk import permit deniable only when milk unsanitary or when importer cannot show equal sanitary standards. — Permits for the importation into Georgia of milk or milk products may be denied by the Commissioner of Agriculture only when the applicant for such permit cannot show that the sanitary standards for the product in force where it

is produced and processed are as adequate as such standards in this state, or when an inspection of the proposed shipment discloses that it does not conform to the sanitary standards of this state; such permits may not be denied solely to protect domestic producers from foreign competition. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-202.

26-2-246. **Furnishing of records by persons operating under article.**

(a) Any person operating under this article shall furnish, upon the request of the Commissioner, such data and statistics as he may require.

(b) All persons operating under this article shall keep complete and accurate records of their operations, and the Commissioner shall have free access to all such records.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, §§ 9, 16; Code 1933,

§§ 42-510, 42-517; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 51.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 15.

ALR.

Construction and application of regulations as to milk, 122 A.L.R. 1062.

26-2-247. Enforcement of article generally.

(a) The Commissioner shall be charged with the enforcement of this article; and he shall have the power and authority, in connection with this and other provisions dealing with milk, food, or food products, to revoke or cancel the permit or license of any person doing business in this state who violates the laws of this state or the rules and regulations made pursuant thereto.

(b) The enforcement methods authorized by this article shall be cumulative of those provided otherwise by law, and the same are not superseded by this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 19; Code 1933, § 42-501; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L.

1961, p. 501, § 11; Ga. L. 1978, p. 1988, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 15.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 58.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 41 et seq.

26-2-248. Injunctions.

Any person, firm, or corporation subject to this article and the other milk laws of this state who violates any of said provisions or any valid rules and regulations made thereunder may be enjoined from such continued violation. The Commissioner is authorized to apply for, and for cause shown the superior court having jurisdiction of the defendant in any such action may grant, injunctive relief, by interlocutory injunction, permanent injunction, or temporary restraining order, as the circumstances may warrant. The proceeding may be maintained notwithstanding the pendency of any civil action and notwithstanding the pendency of or conviction in a criminal proceeding arising from the same transaction. Such action may be maintained without bond. The purpose of this Code section is to create a statutory cause of action by way of injunction, and the Commissioner is authorized to bring such proceedings in the same form and manner and in the same court as other equitable proceedings may be brought. This remedy is not exclusive but is cumulative of other remedies afforded to protect the consuming public from unwholesome products which are economic frauds.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 19; Code 1933, § 42-501; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501, § 11; Ga. L. 1978, p. 1988, § 1; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 15.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 58.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 52.

26-2-249. Unlawful acts.

It shall be unlawful:

(1) To handle milk, cream, butter, ice cream, or other dairy products in unclean or unsanitary places or in an unsanitary manner;

(2) To keep, store, or prepare for market any milk, cream, or other dairy products in the same building or enclosure where any hide or fur or any cow, horse, nontraditional livestock, hog, or other livestock is kept;

(3) To handle or ship milk, cream, ice cream, or other dairy products in unclean or unsanitary vessels;

(4) To expose milk, cream, ice cream, or other dairy products to flies or to any contaminating influence likely to convey pathogenic or other injurious bacteria;

(5) For any common carrier, railway, or express company to neglect or fail to remove or ship from its depot, on the day of its arrival there for shipment, any milk, cream, or other dairy products left at the depot for transportation;

(6) For any common carrier, railway, or express company to allow merchandise of a contaminating nature to be stored on or with dairy products;

(7) To use or possess any branded or registered cream can or milk can or ice cream container for any purpose other than the handling, storing, or shipping of milk, cream, or ice cream; provided, however, that no person other than the rightful owner thereof shall use or possess any can, bottle, or other receptacle if such receptacle shall be marked with the brand or trademark of the owner. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit the temporary possession by a business involved in the normal processing, distribution, or retail sale of dairy products of any can, bottle, or other receptacle which is marked with the brand or trademark of another person or entity prior to its return to the rightful owner in the normal course of business, or if purchased from the rightful owner;

(8) To sell or offer for sale ice cream from a container or a

compartment of a cabinet or fountain which contains any article of food other than ice cream or dairy products;

(9) To sell or offer for sale milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, or other dairy products that are not pure and fresh and handled with clean utensils;

(10) To sell or offer for sale milk or cream from diseased or unhealthy animals or which was handled by any person suffering from or coming in contact with persons affected with any contagious disease;

(11) To sell or offer for sale any milk or cream which shall have been exposed to contamination or into which shall have fallen any unsanitary articles or any foreign substance which would render the milk or cream or the product manufactured therefrom unfit for human consumption; or

(12) To sell or offer for sale milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, or other dairy products which do not comply with the standards and requirements of this article or the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder except raw milk for human consumption which complies with the standards and requirements of Article 18 of this chapter and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

History.

Ga. L. 1929, p. 280, § 7; Code 1933, § 42-508; Ga. L. 1935, p. 167, § 2; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 16; Ga. L. 1995, p. 244, § 29; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1219, § 18; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1298, § 1; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 25/SB 364; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90; Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 6/HB 1175.

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, added “except raw milk for human consumption which complies with the standards and requirements of Article

18 of this chapter and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder” at the end of paragraph (12).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act.’”

Law reviews.

For note on 2000 amendment of this Code section, see 17 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 192 (2000).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 20 et seq., 39, 49 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 41 et seq.

ALR.

Knowledge or actual negligence on part

of seller which is not an element of criminal offense under penal statute relating to sale of unfit food or other commodity, as condition of civil action in tort in which violation of the statute is relied upon as negligence per se or evidence of negligence, 128 A.L.R. 464.

26-2-250. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History. 1933, § 42-9914; Ga. L. 1961, p. 501,
Ga. L. 1931, Ex. Sess., p. 61, § 4; Code § 22; Ga. L. 1980, p. 981, § 19.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d. of food law as affected by ignorance or
35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq. mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or
C.J.S. presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.
36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.
ALR.
Penal offense predicated upon violation

ARTICLE 8

EGGS

Cross references.

Imposition of penalty authorized in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

Regulation by Commissioner of Agriculture of business of hatchery operators and dealers, § 4-7-1 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Labeling, Inspection, Violations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Egg Inspection, Rule 40-3-1-.01 et seq.

Egg Processing Plants, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Egg Inspection, Rule 40-3-2-.01 et seq.

Egg Breaking Room Sanitation, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Egg Inspection, Rule 40-3-3-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 33 et seq.
C.J.S. 36A C.J.S., Foods, §§ 19, 21, 38 et seq.

26-2-260. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

- (1) "Cold storage" means protected storage in a refrigerated place.
- (2) "Commerce" means interstate, foreign, or intrastate commerce.
- (3) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Georgia.
- (4) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture of the State of Georgia.
- (5) "Egg" means the shell egg of the domesticated chicken, turkey, duck, goose, or guinea.
- (6) "Egg handler" means any person who engages in any business in commerce which involves buying or selling any eggs, as a poultry

producer or otherwise, processing any egg products, or otherwise using any eggs in the preparation of human food.

(7) “Egg product” means any dried, frozen, or liquid eggs, with or without added ingredients, except products which contain eggs only in a relatively small proportion or which historically have not been considered by consumers as products of the egg food industry.

(8) “Quality” means the inherent properties of any product which determine its relative degree of excellence.

(9) “Wholesaler” means any person, firm, corporation, association, dealer, or broker selling or offering for sale, in or into this state, more than five cases of eggs in any one week.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 9; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

For an update of crimes and offenses for which the Georgia Crime Information Center is authorized to collect and file identifying data, see 1991 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 91-35.

26-2-261. Classification of eggs.

(a) Within the intent and purpose of this article, eggs classified as:

(1) Storage eggs shall be construed to mean eggs which have been in cold storage for a period of 31 days or longer; and

(2) Fresh eggs shall be construed to mean eggs which have been held in cold storage not longer than 30 days from the date they were packed.

(b) Each container of eggs must be labeled to show size or weight class and standard of quality.

(c) All eggs sold or offered for sale by dealers, as designated by this article, shall be graded as to net weight and standards of quality.

(1) The size or weight classes shall be:

Size or Weight Classes	Minimum Net Wt. Per Doz. (Oz.)	Min. Net Wt. For Indv. Eggs at Rate Per Doz. (Oz.)	Min. Net Wt. Per 30 Doz. (Lbs.)
Jumbo	30	29	56
Extra Large	27	26	50 1/2
Large	24	23	45

<u>Size or Weight Classes</u>	<u>Minimum Net Wt. Per Doz. (Oz.)</u>	<u>Min. Net Wt. For Indv. Eggs at Rate Per Doz. (Oz.)</u>	<u>Min. Net Wt. Per 30 Doz. (Lbs.)</u>
Medium	21	20	39 1/2
Small	18	17	34
Pee Wee	15	14	28

The weight tolerance, per dozen, where eggs are sold at retail, shall be not more than two eggs of the minimum net weight for individual eggs at the rate per dozen. Not more than 5 percent tolerance of the minimum net weight for individual eggs at the rate per dozen shall be allowed where eggs are sold in wholesale lots.

(2) The quality classifications for individual eggs shall be:

(A) Grade AA:

- (i) Shell: clean, unbroken, practically normal.
- (ii) Air cell: one-eighth inch or less in depth, unlimited movement, and free or bubbly.
- (iii) Yolk: outline slightly defined, practically free from defects.
- (iv) White: firm, clear.

(B) Grade A:

- (i) Shell: clean, unbroken, practically normal.
- (ii) Air cell: three-sixteenths inch or less in depth, unlimited movement, and free or bubbly.
- (iii) Yolk: outline fairly well defined, practically free from defects.
- (iv) White: reasonably firm, clear.

(C) Grade B:

- (i) Shell: clean to slightly stained (but not more than one thirty-second of surface if localized or one-sixteenth of surface if scattered), unbroken, abnormal.
- (ii) Air cell: over three-sixteenths inch in depth, unlimited movement, and free or bubbly.
- (iii) Yolk: outline plainly visible, enlarged and flattened, clearly visible germ development but no blood, other serious defects.
- (iv) White: weak and watery, small blood and meat spots

present (but not more than one-eighth inch in diameter aggregate).

(d) The U.S. Standards, Grades, and Weight Classes for Shell Eggs, Part 56, Subpart C, Paragraphs 56,216 and 56,217 established pursuant to the federal Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 are adopted by reference.

(e) All of the classifications indicated in this Code section shall be determined by candling.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 1; Ga. L. 1937, p. 639, § 1; Ga. L. 1953, Jan.-Feb. Sess., p. 49, §§ 1-3; Ga. L. 1956, p. 21, § 1; Ga. L. 1958, p. 27, § 1; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90.

1996, “three-sixteenths” was substituted for “three-sixteenth” in divisions (c)(2)(B)(ii) and (c)(2)(C)(ii), and “one thirty-second” was substituted for “one thirtysecond” in division (c)(2)(C)(i).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Eggs sold by producer at retail must be classified. — Eggs sold at retail by a producer, including those sold di-

rectly to local customers, are subject to the classification requirements. 1970 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U70-98.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 14.

26-2-262. Registration of entities dealing in eggs.

All wholesalers, commission merchants, brokers, retailers, and dealers of any kind or character who desire to sell or offer eggs for sale in this state shall first file with the Commissioner of Agriculture, upon forms furnished by the Commissioner, the name of the firm or person desiring to offer eggs for sale either by themselves or by their agent, together with the address of said firm or person and the type or kind of eggs to be offered for sale.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 4; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 15.

26-2-263. Egg wholesaler and handler licenses.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in business as a wholesaler or as an egg handler without first obtaining a license from the Commissioner. No license issued under this article shall be suspended or revoked except for health and sanitation reasons or violations of this article and until the licensee to be affected shall be provided with reasonable notice thereof and an opportunity for hearing, as provided under Chapter 13 of Title 50, known as the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." Licenses issued under this article shall be valid until suspended or revoked and shall not be transferable with respect to persons or location. There shall be no fee for such license.

(b) Food sales establishments licensed under Article 2 of this chapter, known as the "Georgia Food Act," and shell egg handlers registered under the United States Department of Agriculture shell egg surveillance inspection program shall be exempt from the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 5; Ga. L. 1958, p. 27, § 2; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 6, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 14, 17.

26-2-264. Sales by entities dealing in eggs; exemption of producers from taxation and licensing.

It shall be unlawful for any wholesaler, commission merchant, broker, retailer, or dealer of eggs, either by himself or by his agent, to offer for sale in this state any eggs if this article has not been complied with, provided that nothing in this Code section shall be construed to repeal the exemption given the producer in the sale of commodities of his own production from taxation and licensing by existing laws.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 6; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Eggs sold at retail by producer subject to classification requirements. — Eggs sold at retail by a producer, includ-

ing those sold directly to local customers, are subject to the classification requirements. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U70-98.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 17.

26-2-265. Dealer's invoices of sales to be furnished to Department of Agriculture on request; exception for sales to consumers.

All dealers, wholesale or retail, shall be required to furnish to the Department of Agriculture upon request a copy of the invoice of each sale of eggs, the copy of invoice to show the person or firm to whom the sale was made, the address of such person or firm, and the kind and quantity involved in such sale, provided that nothing contained in this Code section shall be construed to require the filing of a copy of the invoice of a sale to a consumer.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 8; Code 1981, § 26-2-266; Code 1981, § 26-2-265, as re-designated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 15.

26-2-266. Inspectors and assistants; confiscation and destruction of eggs found unfit for human consumption.

(a) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall instruct the agricultural sanitarians and agricultural inspectors of the Department of Agriculture to carry out this article. The Commissioner is authorized in his discretion to select and appoint such other additional assistants as in his judgment he deems necessary to enforce this article.

(b) All such employees of the Department of Agriculture are authorized to confiscate and destroy all eggs found to be unfit for human consumption.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 10; Code 1981, § 26-2-267; Code 1981, § 26-2-266, as re-designated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 12, 33, 59
et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 14, 19, 20, 58.

26-2-267. Promulgation of rules, regulations, grades, and standards; powers of inspectors.

The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to promulgate, issue, and set up such additional rules, regulations, grades, standards, or otherwise as in his judgment are necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this article. The sanitarians and inspectors authorized in Code Section 26-2-266 are authorized to exercise all the authority, powers, and privileges now delegated to the duly authorized food inspectors of the Department of Agriculture by existing law.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 11; Code 1981, § 26-2-268; Code 1981, § 26-2-267, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 12, 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14, 19.

26-2-268. Information labels affixed to cases of eggs.

(a) At the time of packing and candling of each case of eggs, the producer or dealer shall affix a label not less than two inches by four inches or not less than eight square inches on one end of each case and on this label shall be legibly printed or stamped, in letters not less than one-fourth of an inch in size, the date when the eggs were packed and candled or the expiration date, which shall not exceed 45 days from the date packed; the size and grade of the eggs; and either the name and address of the packer or the U.S.D.A. assigned plant number or a state approved plant identification code. The name of the state of origin may be given. When eggs are sold in cartons, the cartons must show the date packed or the expiration date, which shall not exceed 45 days from the date packed, and the grade and size, together with either the name and address of the packer or the U.S.D.A. assigned plant number or a state approved plant identification code. The state of origin may also be given.

(b) Abbreviations of any words in the classification or in designating the grade and size shall not be permitted. The information pertaining to the grade and size shall be shown in legible letters not less than one-fourth of an inch in size. The information pertaining to the name and address of the packer or the U.S.D.A. assigned plant number or a state approved plant identification code and the date packed or expiration date shall be legibly given. All wording on egg cases and egg cartons must be in the English language and must have prior approval from the Georgia Department of Agriculture before using.

(c) Words or phrases tending to becloud or nullify the proper classification of eggs shall not be permitted. Each word of the classification,

including the name of the state of origin, shall appear in the same size type and color in any printed advertisement. Abbreviations of any word in the classification or in designating the size and grade to which eggs belong shall not be permitted. Every person advertising eggs for sale, at retail or wholesale, in newspapers, by window displays, or otherwise shall set forth in the advertisement the classification as to size and grade of the eggs offered for sale. The classification shall be set forth in letters equal in size to those advertising the eggs for sale.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 2; Ga. L. 1937, p. 639, § 3; Ga. L. 1958, p. 27, § 2; Ga. L. 1980, p. 690, § 1; Code 1981, § 26-2-269; Code 1981, § 26-2-268, as redesignated by

Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1; Ga. L. 2003, p. 223, § 1.

Cross references.

False advertising generally, § 10-1-420 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 23 et seq., 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq.

26-2-269. Placard to be displayed; contents.

All eggs offered for sale at retail shall be properly classified in accordance with the following specifications:

(1) A heavy cardboard or placard, not less than eight by eleven inches, shall be conspicuously displayed at all times on or over each receptacle containing eggs offered for sale, setting forth in letters not less than one inch in height, plainly and legibly, the classification as to quality and weight;

(2) The name of the state of origin of eggs may appear on the placard;

(3) The placard shall not be required when eggs are packed in properly labeled cartons. The eggs therein shall be required to come up to the standard as placarded; and

(4) Restaurants, hotels, or other eating places shall be required to display a placard where it can be easily seen by customers or, in lieu thereof, to place this information on the menu.

History.

Ga. L. 1937, p. 639, § 3; Ga. L. 1953, Jan.-Feb. Sess., p. 49, § 4; Ga. L. 1958, p.

27, § 2; Code 1981, § 26-2-270; Code 1981, § 26-2-269, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Eggs sold at retail by producer subject to classification requirements. — Eggs sold at retail by a producer, includ-

ing those sold directly to local customers, are subject to the classification requirements. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U70-98.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 23 et seq., 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring

notice by label or otherwise of the fact that product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

26-2-270. Reciprocal marketing agreement to vary labeling requirements.

The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to enter into reciprocal marketing agreements with other states to vary the labeling requirements provided in this article. Such agreements shall not vary the standards of quality and weights provided in this article, it being the purpose and intent of this Code section to promote and encourage interstate marketing of eggs and to authorize variations of labeling as required in this article where such variations will promote and encourage the marketing of eggs.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 27, § 3; Code 1981,

§ 26-2-271; Code 1981, § 26-2-270, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 23. 72 Am. Jur. 2d, States, Territories, and Dependencies, § 5 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 9, 11. 81A C.J.S., States, § 71 et seq.

26-2-271. “Withhold From Sale Orders”; cost of inspection and release.

(a) Inspectors or sanitarians of the Department of Agriculture, upon determining that this article or the rules and regulations promulgated for its enforcement are being violated, may put “Withhold From Sale Orders” on all eggs being sold or offered for sale in violation of this article or the regulations thereof and shall report the circumstances to the Commissioner of Agriculture for his action.

(b) Eggs upon which “Withhold From Sale Orders” have been issued shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of until such “Withhold From Sale Orders” have been canceled by the Commissioner or his duly authorized agents. The cost of the inspection and release shall be paid by the offender.

History.

Ga. L. 1937, p. 639, § 3; Code 1981,

§ 26-2-272; Code 1981, § 26-2-271, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 62.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 24, 52.

26-2-272. Egg candler and grader licenses.

Each candler and grader of eggs offered for sale shall obtain a license from the Department of Agriculture at no cost, after demonstrating to the satisfaction of the department his capability and qualifications as an egg candler and grader. The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to establish by rule and regulation the minimum qualifications for egg candlers and graders. With the approval of the Commissioner, any person may candle and grade eggs not to exceed 14 days, pending licensing by the department, provided that during this period the employer of such temporary candler and grader shall be accountable for the actions of such candler and grader while acting in such capacity.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 21, § 2; Code 1981, § 26-2-273; Code 1981, § 26-2-272, as redesignated by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 12, 33.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14, 19.

ALR.

Right to enjoin business competitor from unlicensed or otherwise illegal acts or practices, 90 A.L.R.2d 7.

26-2-273. Refrigeration and other handling requirements.

(a) All shell egg producers shall refrigerate eggs upon gathering such eggs. Eggs shall be graded and packed within a reasonable period of time from gathering.

(b) After washing, processing, and packaging, eggs shall be transported, stored, and displayed at an ambient temperature not to exceed 45 degrees Fahrenheit until sold at retail or used by any commercial establishment or public institution.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-273, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1991, "Fahrenheit" was substituted for "Farenheit" in subsection (b).

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1, redesignated former Code Section 26-2-273 as present Code Section 26-2-272, and enacted the present Code Section 26-2-273.

26-2-274. Penalty; duty of prosecuting attorneys to prosecute violations.

Any person, firm, or corporation who violates any provisions of this

article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. It shall be the duty of the prosecuting attorney of the appropriate court to prosecute all persons charged with the violation of this article as soon as the evidence has been transmitted to them by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

History.

Ga. L. 1935, p. 364, § 12; Ga. L. 1991, p. 1115, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation

of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

ARTICLE 9

GRAINS AND BREAD

Cross references.

Regulation of business of grain dealers,
§ 2-9-30 et seq.

26-2-290. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Bread" means the foods commonly known and described as white bread and rolls, including, but not restricted to, Vienna bread, French bread, and Italian bread and rolls of the semibread dough type, such as soft rolls, hamburger, hot dog, parker house, etc., hard rolls, such as Vienna, Kaiser, etc., all made without fillings or icings, but shall not include sweet, yeast-raised rolls or sweet buns, cinnamon rolls or buns, butterfly rolls, etc.

(2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture.

(3) "Degerminated corn meal" means all ground corn, corn meal, and bolted corn meal intended for human consumption which has undergone a refining process with a resultant loss of more than 10 percent of the germ.

(4) "Degerminated hominy grits" means all corn grits, grits, pearled grits, and endosperm portions of corn intended for human consumption which has undergone a refining process with a resultant loss of more than 10 percent of the germs.

(5) "Enrichment" as applied to flour, bread, meal, or grits means the addition thereto of vitamins and other ingredients of the nature

required by this article; and the terms “enriched flour,” “enriched bread,” “enriched degerminated corn meal,” and “enriched degerminated hominy grits” mean bread, flour, corn meal, or grits, as the case may be, which has been enriched to conform to the requirements of this article.

(6) “Flour” means flour of every kind and description made wholly or partly from wheat which conforms to the definition and standard of identity of flour, white flour, wheat flour, phosphated flour, self-rising flour, bromated flour, and plain flour as promulgated in the rules and regulations made by the Commissioner, but excludes whole-wheat flour made only from the whole-wheat berry with no part thereof removed, and also excludes special packaged flours not used for bread baking, such as cake, pancake, cracker, and pastry flours.

(7) “Person” means an individual, firm, corporation, partnership, association, joint stock company, trust, or any unincorporated organization.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 1.

Cross references.

Grits as official prepared food, § 50-3-78.

26-2-291. Vitamins and ingredients in flour; specification changes; milling process.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, mix, compound, sell, or offer for sale, for human consumption in this state, any flour unless the following vitamins and other ingredients are contained in each pound of such flour:

- (1) Not less than 2.0 milligrams of vitamin B1 (thiamin);
- (2) Not less than 1.2 milligrams of riboflavin;
- (3) Not less than 16 milligrams of niacin (nicotinic acid) or niacin amide (nicotinic acid amide); and
- (4) Not less than 13 milligrams of iron.

(b) The enrichment of self-rising flour shall require, in addition to the ingredients required in subsection (a) of this Code section, not less than 500 milligrams of calcium.

(c) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to change, or add to, in his discretion, the specifications for ingredients and the amounts thereof, in order that they shall conform to the federal definition of enriched flour when promulgated or as may from time to time be amended.

(d) If other vitamins and minerals are added to flour, they shall be added only in accordance with the regulations of the Commissioner.

(e) Iron shall be added only in forms which are assimilable and harmless and which do not impair the enriched flour.

(f) The enrichment of flour shall be accomplished by a milling process, addition of vitamins from a natural or synthetic source, addition of minerals, or by a combination of these methods, or by any method which is permitted by the Commissioner with respect to flour.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 2.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 26 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 34.

26-2-292. Vitamins and ingredients in bread; specification changes.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, bake, sell or offer for sale or to receive an interstate shipment for sale for human consumption in this state any bread unless the following vitamins and other ingredients are contained in each pound of such bread:

- (1) Not less than 1.1 milligrams of vitamin B1 (thiamin);
- (2) Not less than 0.7 milligrams of riboflavin;
- (3) Not less than 10.0 milligrams of niacin (nicotinic acid) or niacin amide (nicotinic acid amide); and
- (4) Not less than 10 milligrams of iron.

(b) The enrichment of bread may be accomplished through the use of enriched flour, special yeast, and other enriching ingredients, synthetic vitamins, harmless iron salts, or by any combination of harmless methods which will produce bread enriched so as to meet the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section.

(c) Iron shall be added only in forms which are assimilable and harmless and which do not impair the enriched bread.

(d) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to change, or add to, in his discretion, the specifications for ingredients and the amounts thereof in order that they shall conform to the federal definition of enriched bread when promulgated or as may from time to time be amended.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 3.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 26 et seq., 29.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 34.

26-2-293. Vitamins and ingredients in degerminated corn meal and degerminated hominy grits; specification changes; milling process.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, mix, compound, sell, or offer for sale, for human consumption in this state, any degerminated corn meal or degerminated hominy grits unless the following vitamins and other ingredients are contained in each pound of such products:

- (1) Not less than 2.0 milligrams of vitamin B1 (thiamin);
- (2) Not less than 1.2 milligrams of riboflavin;
- (3) Not less than 16 milligrams of niacin (nicotinic acid) or niacin amide (nicotinic acid amide); and
- (4) Not less than 13 milligrams of iron.

(b) Iron shall be added only in forms which are assimilable and harmless and which do not harm the enriched corn meal or enriched grits.

(c) The substances referred to in subsection (a) of this Code section may be added in a harmless carrier which does not impair the enriched degerminated corn meal or enriched degerminated hominy grits, provided that such carrier is used only in the quantity necessary to effect an intimate and uniform admixture of such substances with the grits or corn meal.

(d) If other vitamins and minerals are added to degerminated corn meal or degerminated hominy grits, they shall be added only in accordance with such pertinent regulations as may be promulgated by the Commissioner of Agriculture.

(e) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to change, or add to, in his discretion, the specifications for ingredients and the amounts thereof in order that they shall conform to the federal definition of enriched degerminated corn meal or enriched degerminated grits when promulgated or as from time to time may be amended.

(f) The enrichment of degerminated corn meal or degerminated hominy grits may be accomplished by a milling process, addition of

vitamins from a natural or synthetic source, other enriching ingredients, harmless and assimilable inorganic salts, or by a combination of these methods which will produce enriched grits or enriched corn meal as herein defined.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 26 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 36.

26-2-294. Exemptions.

The terms of this article shall not apply to:

(1) Flour, corn meal, or grits sold to bakers or other commercial secondary processors if, prior to or simultaneously with delivery, the purchaser furnishes to the seller a certificate of intent in such form as the Commissioner shall by regulation prescribe, certifying that such flour, corn meal, or grits shall be used only in the production of flour, bread, corn meal, or grits enriched within the given establishment to meet the requirements of this article or shall be used in the manufacture of products other than those covered by this article. It shall be unlawful for any such purchaser so furnishing any such certificate of intent to use the unenriched flour, corn meal, or grits so purchased in any manner other than as stated in the certificate;

(2) Flour or bread which is made from the entire wheat berry with no parts of the wheat removed from the mixture. In cases of flour or bread containing mixtures of the whole wheat berry and white flour or mixture of various portions of the wheat berry, such products shall have a vitamin and mineral potency at least equal to enriched flour or enriched bread as described herein;

(3) Corn meal or grits which is made from the entire corn with no parts of the corn removed from the mixture, but shall not be construed to prevent the enrichment of such products if so desired by the manufacturer. Any products so enriched must conform to standards and labeling provisions as provided in this article as modified by the Commissioner;

(4) Flour, corn meal, or grits for the wheat and corn producer whereby the miller is paid in wheat or corn or feed for the grinding service rendered, except in so far as such a mill may produce flour or degerminated corn meal or grits and sell or offer for sale such products, whereupon this article shall be applicable; nor shall this article apply to farmers in exchanging their corn for corn meal and wheat for flour, or having the same ground into flour, corn meal, or

grits and disposing of the same for their own use or the use of the farm labor on their farms; or

(5) Mills doing custom grinding of wheat, whose capacity is 20 bushels of wheat per hour or less, and for custom mills that do not use artificial methods for bleaching flour.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 5.

26-2-295. Labeling requirements.

It shall be unlawful to sell or offer for sale in this state any enriched flour, enriched bread, enriched degerminated corn meal, or enriched degerminated hominy grits which, if wrapped, fails to conform to the labeling requirements of the Commissioner of Agriculture.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Constitutionality of statutes, requiring notice by label or otherwise of the fact that

product is imported or as to place of production, 124 A.L.R. 572.

26-2-296. Duties of Commissioner of Agriculture.

(a) The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized as the administrative agency and is directed:

(1) To make, amend, and rescind such rules and regulations, in his discretion, as may be necessary to carry out this article, including, but without being limited to, such orders, rules, and regulations as he is hereinafter specifically authorized and directed to make; and

(2) From time to time to adopt, in his discretion, such regulations changing or adding to the required ingredients for flour, bread, corn meal, or grits, specified in Code Sections 26-2-291 through 26-2-293, as shall be necessary to conform to the definitions and standards of identity of enriched flour, enriched bread, enriched degerminated corn meal, and enriched degerminated hominy grits, from time to time promulgated by the rules and regulations made by the Commissioner.

(b) All orders, rules, and regulations adopted by the Department of Agriculture pursuant to this article shall be published as provided for in subsection (c) of this Code section, and, within the limits specified by this article, shall become effective upon such date as the Commissioner shall fix.

(c) Whenever under this article publication of any notice, order, rule, or regulation is required, such publication shall be made at least three times in ten days in newspapers of general circulation in three different sections of the state.

(d) The Commissioner is authorized to collect samples for analysis and to conduct examinations and investigations for the purposes of this article through any officers or employees under his supervision; and all such officers and employees shall have authority to enter to inspect any factory, mill, warehouse, shop, or establishment where flour, bread, corn meal, or grits is manufactured, processed, packed, sold, or held, or to inspect any vehicle and any flour, bread, corn meal, or grits therein, and all pertinent equipment, materials, containers, and labeling.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 7; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 6, 49.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 10, 14.

ALR.

Liability of owner or occupant of prem-

ises to building or construction inspector coming upon premises in discharge of duty, 28 A.L.R.3d 891.

26-2-297. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article or the orders, rules, or regulations promulgated by the Department of Agriculture under authority of this article shall, upon conviction thereof, be subject to a fine for each and every offense in a sum not exceeding \$100.00 or to imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both.

History.

Ga. L. 1945, p. 425, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 61 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation

of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

ARTICLE 10

FISH AND OTHER SEAFOODS

Cross references.

Imposition of penalty authorized in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

Regulation of commercial fishing and fish dealing generally, § 27-4-70 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Additional Regulations Applicable to Crab Meat Plants, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-4-.01 et seq.

Additional Regulations Applicable to

Retail Sale of Fresh and Frozen Seafood, Meat, Poultry and other Foods from Mobile Vehicles, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-5-.01 et seq.

The Handling, Storage, Shucking, Packing, Shipping and/or Sale of Shellfish, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-12-.01 et seq.

26-2-310. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Nonresident of the State of Georgia” means a person who has not maintained a continuous residence in this state for one year and not resided therein for six months next preceding the time when he makes application for a license.

(2) “Resident of the State of Georgia” means a person who has maintained a continuous residence in this state for one year and has resided therein for the six-month period preceding the time when he makes application for a license and a corporation organized under the laws of this state, of which a majority of the stockholders are residents of this state, or a foreign corporation which has become domesticated and qualified with the Secretary of State to do business in this state six months before it makes application for a license.

(3) “Seafood” means all fresh or frozen fish and all fresh or frozen shellfish, such as shrimp, oysters, clams, scallops, lobsters, crayfish, and other similar fresh or frozen edible products. However, nothing in this article shall apply to any canned or salted seafoods.

(4) “Wholesale fish dealer” means any person, firm, association of persons, or corporation who sells fish or seafood of any kind to a retail dealer, a wholesale dealer, hotels, restaurants, or other public eating places of any kind or nature whatsoever.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 4.

26-2-311. Administration by Commissioner of Agriculture.

It shall be the duty of the Commissioner of Agriculture to administer this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 3.

26-2-312. Wholesale fish dealers' licenses.

(a) No person, firm, association of persons, or corporation shall be authorized or permitted to engage in the business of wholesale fish dealer in this state without first having paid to the Commissioner of Agriculture the annual license fees required in this Code section and having procured a license from the Commissioner authorizing such person to engage in the business of wholesale fish dealer. Any fees collected pursuant to this Code section shall be retained pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 45-12-92.1. The annual license fee applicable to and required of wholesale fish dealers shall be as follows:

(1) The annual license fee for each resident wholesale fish dealer shall be \$60.00 for each place of business, fixed or movable; and

(2) The annual license fee for each nonresident or alien wholesale fish dealer shall be \$60.00 for each place of business, fixed or movable, provided that the annual license fee for each nonresident or alien wholesale fish dealer who is a resident of a state which charges Georgia resident wholesale fish dealers a fee in excess of \$60.00 shall be the same as the fee such state charges Georgia resident wholesale fish dealers for each place of business, fixed or movable. The Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Georgia may enter into a reciprocal agreement with any other state to limit the fees such state charges a Georgia resident who operates as a wholesale fish dealer or its equivalent in such other state.

(b) Each truck or movable unit from which fish are sold at wholesale shall be deemed a place of business within the meaning of this article.

(c) A resident who produces the fish and other seafood he or she sells at retail or wholesale shall not be required to pay the license fee provided in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of this Code section; nor shall any commercial fisherman licensed to catch fish or seafood by the state game and fish laws, rules, and regulations be required to pay the license fee provided for in this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 5;
Ga. L. 1939, p. 316, § 1; Ga. L. 1945, p.
315, § 1; Ga. L. 1953, Jan.-Feb. Sess., p.

521, § 2; Ga. L. 1987, p. 908, § 1; Ga. L.
2002, p. 819, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-
58/HB 1055; Ga. L. 2011, p. 752, § 26/HB
142.

Cross references.

Commercial fishing and fish dealing generally, § 27-4-70 et seq.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Licensing. — Commercial fishermen licensed by the Game and Fish Commission are not required to obtain wholesale fish dealer's license to sell their catch. 1954-56 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 554.

Veteran's certificate of exemption does not apply to the regulatory fee imposed on wholesale fish dealers. 1945-47 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 484.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fish, Game, and Wildlife Conservation, § 35 et seq. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 11.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 17.

26-2-313. Applications for wholesale fish dealers' licenses.

(a) Each and every person desiring to engage in the business of wholesale fish dealer in this state shall annually on or before January 1 in every year make application to the Commissioner of Agriculture for a license in which such applicant shall state his name, his post office address, the nature of business in which he desires to engage, and the place at which he proposes to conduct his business. Such applicant shall also furnish to the Commissioner such other and additional information as the Commissioner may require. When such information is furnished, the Commissioner shall advise the applicant the amount of the license tax required of such applicant, and when said annual license tax is paid, the Commissioner shall issue to such applicant a license which shall particularly state the nature of the business which the applicant thereunder is authorized to conduct in this state and the place or places from which it may be conducted.

(b) The annual license fee shall be payable on or before January 1 of each and every year thereafter; provided, however, that whenever an application is submitted after July 1 of any year, the annual license fee for the remaining portion of such year shall be one-half of the annual license fee provided for in Code Section 26-2-312.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 6.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Licensing. — Commercial fishermen licensed by the Game and Fish Commission are not required to obtain wholesale

fish dealer's license to sell their catch. 1954-56 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 554.

Veteran's certificate of exemption

does not apply to the regulatory fee
imposed on wholesale fish dealers.
1945-47 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 484.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Fish, Game, and Wildlife Conservation, § 30 et seq. 35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 11.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 17.

ALR.

Right to enjoin business competitor from unlicensed or otherwise illegal acts or practices, 90 A.L.R.2d 7.

26-2-314. License revocation.

The license of any wholesale fish dealer is subject to revocation by the Commissioner of Agriculture for violation of any law, rule, or regulation pertaining to the sale or distribution of seafoods or fish.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 14.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 11.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 18.

26-2-315. Promulgation of rules and regulations regarding sanitation, distribution, and transportation of fish and seafoods.

The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to regulate and prescribe rules and regulations with respect to the proper method of sanitation, distribution, and transportation of all fish and seafoods in this state and, as well, all fish and seafood transported from all other states. To this end the Commissioner may require that all fish and seafoods transported into and in and through this state shall be in refrigerated cars or by refrigerated trucks with insulated bodies or in containers disconnected from the body of the truck or by express or in boxes or other containers adequately iced. When fish and seafoods are transported from this state by truck, they shall be equipped with enclosed insulated bodies or containers disconnected from the body of the truck with proper refrigeration to carry the fish and seafood in good condition with 50 percent weight of ice to weight of fish or seafoods.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 7;
Ga. L. 1992, p. 6, § 26.

state shipment of oysters and clams produced in state, § 27-4-197.

Cross references.

Shellfish sanitation program for inter-

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 3 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 5.

26-2-316. Suitable equipment and sanitation for wholesale fish dealers.

The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to require each wholesale fish dealer having a fixed place of business to provide suitable equipment and sanitation to handle and care for fish and seafoods in a sanitary manner; and that each wholesale dealer having a fixed place of business shall have in his place of business a refrigerated or insulated box or cooler in which a degree of not higher than 40 degrees temperature shall be maintained and that his place of business shall have proper drainage and sewerage for the care of waste in the proper dressing or processing of fish and seafoods.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 15, 18.

26-2-317. Equipment for traveling fish dealers.

No person shall be permitted as a traveling fish dealer to conduct a business in this state unless he is so equipped with refrigerated and insulated containers and unless his vehicle is so equipped with proper refrigeration or insulation as to provide adequate safeguards to prevent the sale of unsanitary products.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 9.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

26-2-318. Inspection of fish and seafoods.

It shall be the duty of the Commissioner of Agriculture to provide the proper and necessary inspection of all fish and seafoods sold or distributed in this state or transported into this state from other states.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 10.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 12.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 19.

26-2-319. [Reserved] Allocation of license fees.**History.**

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 11; repealed by Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-58.1/HB 1055, effective May 12, 2010.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2010, p. 9, § 1-58.1/HB 1055 repealed and reserved this Code section, effective May 12, 2010.

26-2-320. Penalty.

Any person who violates any provision of this article or any valid rule or regulation promulgated by the Commissioner of Agriculture pursuant to the terms of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 30 days nor more than six months or by a fine of not less than \$50.00 nor more than \$500.00, or by both fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court.

History.

Ga. L. 1937-38, Ex. Sess., p. 332, § 12.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation

of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

ARTICLE 11

KOSHER FOODS

26-2-330 through 26-2-335. [Reserved].**History.**

Ga. L. 1980, p. 1767, § 1; repealed by Ga. L. 2010, p. 114, § 2/HB 1345, effective May 20, 2010.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2010, p. 114, § 21/HB 1345 repealed and reserved this article, effective May 20, 2010.

ARTICLE 12

SOFT DRINKS

Cross references.

Imposition of penalty authorized in lieu of other action, § 2-2-10.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Additional Regulations Applicable to Manufacturers, Distributors, and Bottlers

of Bottled Soft Drinks and Soft Drink Syrups, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-9-.01 et seq.

Law reviews.

For note, “Beer, Liquor, or a Little Bit of Both? Getting to the Bottom of Properly Classifying Flavored Malt Beverages in the United States and Australia,” see 39 Ga. J. Int’l & Comp. L. 471 (2011).

26-2-350. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Bottled soft drink” means all nonalcoholic beverages, whether carbonated or not, such as soda water, carbonated water, orangeade, lemonade, fruit juice when any plain or carbonated water, flavoring, or syrup is added, or any and all preparations commonly referred to as “soft drinks” of whatever kind, which are closed and sealed in glass, paper, metal, or any other type of container or bottle, whether manufactured with or without the use of any syrup. This term shall not include fluid milk to which no flavoring has been added, or natural undiluted fruit or vegetable juice but shall include these drinks when mixed with any syrup, flavoring, water, or additive.

(2) “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Agriculture.

(3) “Person” means any person, firm, corporation, association, or any combination thereof.

(4) “Soft drink syrup” means the compound mixture or the basic ingredients, whether dry or liquid, practically and commercially usable in making, mixing, or compounding soft drinks at soda fountains by the mixing thereof with carbonated or plain water, ice, fruit, milk, or any other product suitable to make a soft drink, or any such syrup used in the manufacture, bottling, or distribution of a bottled soft drink.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 1.

26-2-351. License for manufacture and bottling; separate license for each business or bottling or manufacturing plant.

(a) In addition to complying with the food laws of this state, no person shall manufacture or bottle any soft drink or soft drink syrup within this state unless he or she has a current food sales establishment license from the Commissioner.

(b) Each place of business or bottling or manufacturing plant shall be required to obtain a separate license.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 2; Ga. L. 2007, p. 103, § 3/HB 112.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 34.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 17, 36.

ALR.

Power to require license for sale of soft drinks, 6 A.L.R. 1417.

26-2-352. Sanitary standards and specifications for the manufacture, bottling, and distribution of soft drinks or soft drink syrup.

The Commissioner is charged with the enforcement of this article and is authorized to adopt sanitary standards and specifications for the manufacture, bottling, and distribution of a bottled soft drink or a soft drink syrup. No person shall manufacture, bottle, or distribute any bottled soft drink or soft drink syrup that has been produced, manufactured, bottled, or distributed under sanitary conditions and specifications that are less than those adopted by the Commissioner; provided, however, that such standards and specifications shall be no less than those adopted pursuant to the food laws of this state.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 3.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Bottled soft drinks subject to section on misbranding. — Provisions of § 26-2-28) apply to bottled soft drinks. 1958-59 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 7.
Ga. L. 1956, p. 195 (see now O.C.G.A.)

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 34.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 36.

ALR.

Validity of regulations as to ingredients of nonalcoholic soft drinks, 41 A.L.R. 930.

Presumption or prima facie case of negligence based on presence of foreign substance in bottled or canned beverage, 52 A.L.R.2d 117.

Liability of manufacturer or seller for injury caused by beverage sold, 77 A.L.R.2d 215.

26-2-353. Promulgation of rules and regulations; administrative personnel.

The Commissioner is authorized to promulgate reasonable rules and regulations to effectuate this article. He shall employ the necessary personnel and fix their compensation to assist him in the administration of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 4.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 34.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 4, 14.

ALR.

Validity of regulations as to ingredients of nonalcoholic soft drinks, 41 A.L.R. 930.

26-2-354. Suspension or revocation of license; hearing.

Any license issued pursuant to this article may be suspended or revoked by the Commissioner for the violation of this article or of any of the sanitary standards and specifications or rules and regulations issued pursuant to this article. The Commissioner shall notify the person whose license is to be suspended or revoked, by registered or certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, of his intent to suspend or revoke the license and shall afford such person a hearing before him, within ten days after receipt of the notice, to show cause why the license should not be suspended or revoked.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 5; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 3.

the amendment to this Code section is applicable with respect to notices delivered on or after July 1, 2000.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 16, provides that

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 11, 34.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 18.

ALR.

Validity of regulations as to ingredients of nonalcoholic soft drinks, 41 A.L.R. 930.

26-2-355. Sanitary inspection of building, area, structure, plant, or vehicle used in the manufacture, bottling, or distribution of soft drinks or soft drink syrup.

The Commissioner or his authorized representatives shall have access, at any reasonable hour, to any building, area, structure, plant, or vehicle used in the manufacture, bottling, or distribution of a bottled soft drink or soft drink syrup to inspect sanitary conditions therein.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 6.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 12, 34.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 21, 36.

26-2-356. Applicability of article to dairy or milk processing or distributing plants otherwise licensed.

Any dairy or milk processing or distributing plant licensed under other laws of this state shall not be required to obtain the license provided for in this article but shall be subject to all other provisions of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 8.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Soft drinks, ice cream, and the like, as food within Sunday Law, 21 A.L.R. 754.

26-2-357. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article or any sanitary standard or specification or rule or regulation adopted pursuant to this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1956, p. 611, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, § 54 et seq.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 59 et seq.

ALR.

Penal offense predicated upon violation of food law as affected by ignorance or mistake of fact, lack of criminal intent, or presence of good faith, 152 A.L.R. 755.

Liability of manufacturer or seller for injury caused by beverage sold, 77 A.L.R.2d 215.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by spoilage or contamination of beverage, 87 A.L.R.4th 804.

Liability for injury or death allegedly caused by foreign substance in beverage, 90 A.L.R.4th 12.

ARTICLE 13

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Administrative rules and regulations.

Food Service, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of

Georgia, Georgia Department of Public Health, Food and Lodging Establishments, Rule 511-6-1-.01 et seq.

26-2-370. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Food nutrition information" means the content of food, including, but not limited to, the caloric, fat, carbohydrate, cholesterol,

fiber, sugar, potassium, protein, vitamin, mineral, and sodium content.

(2) "Food service establishment" means establishments for the preparation and serving of meals, lunches, short orders, sandwiches, frozen desserts, or other edible products either for carry out or service within the establishment. Such term includes restaurants; coffee shops; cafeterias; short order cafes; luncheonettes; taverns; lunch-rooms; places which retail sandwiches or salads; soda fountains; institutions, both public and private; mobile food service establishments; industrial cafeterias; catering establishments; and similar facilities by whatever name called. Within a food service establishment, there may be a food sales component, not separately operated. This food sales component shall be considered as part of the food service establishment. Such term shall not include:

(A) A food sales establishment, as defined in Code Section 26-2-21, except as otherwise stated in this paragraph;

(B) The food service component of any food sales establishment defined in Code Section 26-2-21;

(C) Any outdoor recreation activity sponsored by the state, a county, a municipality, or any department or entity thereof, any outdoor or indoor (other than school cafeteria food service) public school function, or any outdoor private school function;

(D) Any organization which is operating on its own property or on the property of a party that has provided written consent for the use of such property for such purpose and which is exempt from taxes under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 48-7-25 or under Section 501(d) or paragraphs (1) through (8) or paragraph (10) of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code for the purpose of operating a house or other residential structures where seriously ill or injured children and their families are provided temporary accommodations in proximity to their treatment hospitals and where food is prepared, served, transported, or stored by volunteer personnel;

(E) Establishments for the preparation and serving of meals, lunches, short orders, sandwiches, frozen desserts, or other edible products if such preparation or serving is an authorized part of and occurs upon the site of an event which:

(i) Is sponsored by a political subdivision of this state;

(ii) Is held on the property of such sponsor or on the property of a party that has provided written consent for use of such property for such event; and

(iii) Lasts 120 hours or less; or

(F) Nonprofit food sales and food service provided under a permit issued pursuant to Article 14 of this chapter.

(3) “Mobile food service establishment” means a mobile food service unit operating from a single base of operation and under the managerial authority of one permit holder.

(4) “Person” or “persons” means any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, trustee, or association, or combination thereof.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 1; Code 1933, § 88-1001, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 660, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1174, § 2; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 2; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1558, § 3; Ga. L. 2001, p. 1216, § 1; Ga. L. 2008, p. 361, § 1/HB 1303; Ga. L. 2011, p. 308, § 4/HB 457; Ga. L. 2013, p. 760, § 1/HB 101; Ga. L. 2014, p. 857, § 1/HB 778; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 3/SB 345; Ga. L. 2022, p. 574, § 1/HB 1443.

The 2022 amendment, effective January 1, 2023, inserted a comma following “food” in paragraph (1); in paragraph (2), substituted “Such” for “This” at the beginning of the second and fifth sentences and substituted “mobile food service establishments” for “food carts; itinerant restaurants” in the second sentence; added paragraph (3); and redesignated former paragraph (3) as present paragraph (4).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

1985, “lunchrooms” was substituted for “lunch rooms” in the second sentence of paragraph (1) (now paragraph (2)).

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1986, a semicolon was substituted for a comma following “lunchrooms” in the second sentence of paragraph (1) (now paragraph (2)).

Editor’s notes.

For application of this statute in 2020 and 2021, see Executive Orders 04.27.20.01, 05.12.20.02, 05.28.20.02, 06.11.20.01, 06.29.20.02, 07.15.20.01, 07.31.20.02, 08.15.20.01, 08.31.20.02, 09.15.20.01, 09.30.20.02, 10.15.20.01, 10.30.20.02, 11.13.20.01, 11.30.20.02, 12.08.20.01, 12.30.20.02, 01.15.21.01, 01.29.21.02, 02.15.21.01, 02.26.21.02, 03.12.21.01, 03.31.21.03, and 04.30.21.01.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2013 amendment of this Code section, see 30 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2013).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Food retailers with seating subject to inspection. — Food sales establishments defined in Ga. L. 1956, p. 195, § 2 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-21(a)(5)) providing seating arrangements and other conveniences within its premises for customers to use in eating food items purchased in that store shall be subject to inspection as a “food service establishment,” as de-

fined in former Code 1933, § 88-1001 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-2-370). 1978 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 78-65.

Establishments selling food on a “walk-up” or “drive-up” basis are food service establishments and as such are subject to regulation by the Department of Human Resources. 1991 Op. Att’y Gen. No. U91-9.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, §§ 9, 10, 27.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 1 et seq. 43A C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, § 5 et seq.

ALR.

What is “restaurant,” “cafe,” or “victualing house” within Sunday Law, 9 A.L.R. 428.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances prohibiting or

regulating automatic vending machines,
111 A.L.R. 755; 151 A.L.R. 1195.

26-2-371. Food service establishment and mobile food service establishment permits.

It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a food service establishment without having first obtained a valid food service establishment permit. Such permits shall be issued by the county board of health or its duly authorized representative, subject to supervision and direction by the Department of Public Health; but, where the county board of health is not functioning, such permit shall be issued by the Department of Public Health. Except as provided for in Code Section 26-2-379, such permits shall be valid until suspended or revoked and shall not be transferable with respect to person or location. When a mobile food service establishment has been permitted in any county, that permit shall be recognized by all counties pursuant to Code Section 26-2-379. Except as provided for in Code Section 26-2-379, nothing contained in this article shall prevent any municipality from adopting rules and regulations governing the licensing and operation of food service establishments.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 2; Code 1933, § 88-1002, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214; Ga. L. 2022, p. 574, § 2/HB 1443.

The 2022 amendment, effective January 1, 2023, substituted “Except as provided for in Code Section 26-2-379, such”

for “Such” at the beginning of the third sentence; added the fourth sentence; and substituted “Except as provided for in Code Section 26-2-379, nothing” for “Nothing” at the beginning of the last sentence.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, §§ 25 et seq., 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

43A C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, §§ 6, 14 et seq.

ALR.

Validity of statute or ordinance relating to place of sale of food, 52 A.L.R. 669.

26-2-372. Permits — Issuance; suspension, revocation, or denial; notice and hearing.

The Department of Public Health, or county boards of health acting as agents of the department, shall have the power and authority to issue permits to operate food service establishments and to suspend or revoke such permits in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated as provided for in this article. When, in the judgment of the department or the county board of health, acting as

agent of the former, it is necessary and proper that such application for a permit be denied or that the permit previously granted be suspended or revoked, the applicant or holder thereof shall be afforded notice and hearing as provided in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 31. In the event that such application is finally denied, suspended, or revoked, the applicant or holder of the permit shall be notified in writing. Such written notice shall specifically state any and all reasons why the application has been denied or the permit has been suspended or revoked.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 3; Code 1933, § 88-1003, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, §§ 27, 37 et seq.

C.J.S.

43A C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, §§ 6, 14 et seq.

ALR.

Validity of statute or ordinance relating to place of sale of food, 52 A.L.R. 669.

26-2-373. Promulgation of rules, regulations, and standards by Department of Public Health and county boards of health; exemption for nonprofit schools and institutions producing own milk.

(a) For the purpose of protecting the public health, the Department of Public Health shall have the power to adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations as it deems necessary and proper to carry out the purpose and intent of this article, including the establishment of reasonable standards of sanitation for food service establishments and such establishments which are also retail frozen dessert packagers and the examination and condemnation of unwholesome food therein. County boards of health are authorized to adopt and promulgate supplementary rules and regulations, including the establishment of reasonable standards of sanitation for food service establishments, consistent with those adopted and promulgated by the department; provided, however, that no county board of health or political subdivision of this state shall enact any ordinance or issue any rules and regulations pertaining to the provision of food nutrition information at food service establishments. As used in this subsection, the term “political subdivision” means any municipality, county, local government authority, board, or commission; however, such term shall not include any state agency or state authority. The department and the

county boards of health may obtain technical and laboratory assistance from the Department of Agriculture.

(b) Nonprofit schools and institutions serving family-style meals shall not be included under the present law or any future law or any rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to such laws regulating the dispensing of milk in the kitchens and dining halls of such schools and institutions, provided such school or institution produces the milk on the school's or institution's farm which passes Department of Public Health and local health department sanitary requirements.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 4; Code 1933, § 88-1004, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 1992, p. 1279, § 2; Ga. L. 2008, p. 361, § 2/HB 1303; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Cross references.

Inspection by Commissioner of Agriculture of meat and meat products located within or held for sale or consumption in food service establishments, § 26-2-106.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Food Service, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Public Health, Food and Lodging Establishments, Rule 511-6-1-.01 et seq.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 3, 7. 40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, § 10.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, §§ 3, 4. 43A C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, § 6.

ALR.

Validity of statute or ordinance relating to place of sale of food, 52 A.L.R. 669.

26-2-373.1. Use of hair nets or hats by food preparers; penalty.

(a) A person who, in the ordinary course of business in a food service establishment, prepares food which is to be consumed by humans shall wear, when preparing food, appropriate hair nets or hats or restraints to prevent contamination of such food.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of Code Section 26-2-377, any person who violates subsection (a) of this Code section shall be subject to a civil penalty as follows:

(1) For a first offense, neither fine nor punishment, but only a warning; and

(2) For a second or subsequent offense, a civil penalty not to exceed \$50.00.

(c) The county board of health or its representative which issues food

service establishment permits under this article shall be authorized to impose the penalties authorized under subsection (b) of this Code section and shall provide the permit holder with notice of any violation of subsection (a) of this Code section.

(d) Hair nets shall not be required of food preparers when the preparer is a volunteer without payment for his or her services and the food is being prepared for a religious, educational, charitable, or nonprofit corporation.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-373.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1997, p. 836, § 1; Ga. L. 1998, p. 128, § 26.

26-2-374. Contents and posting of notices relating to assistance to persons choking; relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid.

(a) The Department of Public Health shall print and distribute notices to every food service establishment in this state explaining the proper procedures to be taken to assist or aid persons who are choking. The notices shall contain such information as is found appropriate or necessary by the department and shall be posted and maintained by the food service establishment in a conspicuous place or places on the premises as required by the department.

(b) Any person who renders emergency aid in good faith to persons who are choking, without any charge for his services, shall not be liable for any civil damages for any act or omission in rendering such emergency aid or as a result of any act or failure to act to provide or arrange for further treatment or care for such persons.

History.

Code 1933, § 88-1004.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1979, p. 1272, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Cross references.

Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency care generally, § 51-1-29.

Law reviews.

For comment, “Good Samaritan Laws — Legal Disarray: An Update,” see 38 Mercer L. Rev. 1439 (1987).

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**ALR.**

Construction and application of “Good Samaritan” statutes, 68 A.L.R.4th 294.

26-2-375. Enforcement of article; inspection of food service and food sales establishments.

(a) The Department of Public Health and the county boards of health, acting as duly authorized agents of the department, are authorized to enforce this article and rules, regulations, and standards adopted and promulgated under this article in establishments that have the majority of square footage of building floor space, including indoor and outdoor dining areas, used for the operation of food service as defined in Code Section 26-2-370. Their duly authorized representatives are authorized to enter upon and inspect the premises of any food service establishment as provided in Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 31.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this article, food sales establishments as defined in Code Section 26-2-21 shall be inspected and regulated under Article 2 of this chapter and shall not be subject to inspection or enforcement under this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 7; Code 1933, § 88-1006, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 1985, p. 660, § 2; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1558, § 4; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 7, 12. 40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, § 30.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 4. 43A C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, § 12.

26-2-376. Review of final order or determination by Department of Public Health; appeal to superior court.

Any person aggrieved by any final order or determination of any county board of health denying, suspending, or revoking any permit authorized in this article may secure review thereof by the Department of Public Health by appeal in the manner prescribed in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 31. Any person aggrieved by any final order or determination made by the Department of Public Health, whether originally or on appeal, may secure review thereof by appeal to the superior court in the manner prescribed in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 31.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 8; Code 1933, § 88-1007, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

26-2-377. Penalty.

Any person who violates any provision of this article or any rule or regulation promulgated under this article by the Department of Public Health or by any county board of health shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1958, p. 371, § 11; Code 1933, § 88-1008, enacted by Ga. L. 1964, p. 499, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

40A Am. Jur. 2d, Hotels, Motels, and Restaurants, § 28.

26-2-378. Disclosure of meat products that contain extenders; exception.

(a) All food service establishments in this state which serve meat products that contain extenders, such as textured vegetable protein, textured soy flour, fortified textured vegetable protein, or other such products, shall display on their menus, or by placards visible to the public, information stating that the meat product contains extenders. Products which contain extenders shall not be advertised using names which designate all meat products. The menu or other advertisement must bear the same name that appears on the package when received from the processor and the ingredients statement as listed on the label.

(b) This Code section shall not be applicable to the serving of meat products which do not contain such an amount of extenders as to require additional labeling in accordance with other laws of the United States and laws of this state relating to meat products.

History.

Code 1933, § 88-1009, enacted by Ga. L. 1974, p. 1116, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

35A Am. Jur. 2d, Food, §§ 23, 26, 31.

C.J.S., Inns, Hotels, and Eating Places, § 17.

C.J.S.

36A C.J.S., Food, § 38 et seq. 43A

26-2-379. Mobile food service establishment permits; inspections; fees.

(a) A county board of health outside a mobile food service establishment's county of origin shall recognize the permit from the mobile food service establishment's county of origin as provided for in this Code section. Such recognition shall authorize the mobile food service establishment to operate in an outside county subject to the ordinances of such county or city.

(b) A county board of health shall use the following process to recognize a permit from a mobile food service establishment's county of origin:

(1) Prior to operating in a county outside the mobile food service establishment's county of origin, a mobile food service establishment shall submit to the county board of health in the outside county a copy of its mobile food service establishment permit from its county of origin, its permit for its base of operations, a listing of any other counties where it is authorized to operate, a listing of locations in the county where the mobile food service establishment intends to operate, a listing of the dates and times of intended operation, and any other documentation required by the county board of health. The listing of any other counties where the mobile food service establishment intends to operate shall be updated by the mobile food service establishment when it operates in additional counties. Such information shall be submitted in a manner determined by the county board of health, but an electronic delivery format shall be available; and

(2) Upon receipt of all required information, the county board of health in the outside county shall verify on the Department of Public Health's permit inspection data base that the permit is in good standing in the county of origin and in any other counties where the mobile food service establishment has been authorized to operate. All county boards of health shall utilize the department's permit inspection data base. The county board of health for such outside county may charge an administrative fee, limited to the costs incurred, to confirm the mobile food service establishment's standing in other counties where it is authorized to operate. Upon verification that the permit is in good standing and there are not public health or safety concerns, a county shall recognize the permit and shall authorize the mobile food service establishment to operate in its jurisdiction and have jurisdiction over the mobile food service establishment.

(c) An outside county may refuse to recognize a mobile food service establishment's permit if the base of operation or mobile unit permit is not from another county in this state, if the base of operation or mobile unit permit is not in good standing in the county of origin or any county

within which it is authorized to operate, or for public health and safety concerns. If the county refuses to recognize a mobile food service establishment's permit, the county shall provide the mobile food service establishment written notice regarding the basis for its refusal.

(d) The mobile food service establishment may be subject to periodic and unannounced inspections in any outside county where its permit has been recognized. County boards of health shall utilize discretion when inspecting mobile food service establishments that have been authorized to operate in multiple jurisdictions to ensure they are not inspected more frequently than necessary to protect public health and safety. A mobile food service establishment shall allow the county board of health access for inspection when the mobile food service establishment is physically operating in such county.

(e) Fees for inspections conducted in outside counties shall be paid in full by the next business day. Failure to pay for inspections in outside counties will result in termination of authorization to operate in that county. The inspection fee shall be limited to the administrative costs incurred by the county to complete the inspection.

(f) If any such inspection results in a violation, any outside county shall notify the county of origin and any other counties where the mobile food service establishment is authorized to operate of the violation. Any county where the mobile food service establishment operates may issue a court citation, terminate authorization for the mobile food service establishment to operate in the county, or require implementation of a remediation plan for the violation.

(g) A mobile food service establishment shall stay current with its annual inspection fees in its county of origin and shall provide any outside counties where it is authorized to operate proof of currency before operating in that county.

(h) Mobile food service establishment operators shall be required to return to their base of operation at least daily or more often if needed to service their unit with fresh water and to empty their wastewater tank.

(i) If at any time a mobile food service establishment's permit is no longer in good standing in any jurisdiction, a county may revoke the establishment's authorization to operate in its jurisdiction.

(j) The Department of Public Health may establish an expedited permit approval and recognition process for mobile food service establishments for counties to utilize that is consistent with the provisions of this Code section.

(k) The Department of Public Health may develop rules and regulations governing the operation of mobile food service establishments.

Any such rules and regulations shall be tailored to address health and safety risks.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-379, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 574, § 3/HB 1443.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective January 1, 2023.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Special Food Service Operations, Offi-

cial Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Public Health, Food and Lodging Establishments, Food Service, Rule 511-6-1-.08.

ARTICLE 14

NONPROFIT FOOD SALES AND FOOD SERVICE

26-2-390. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Nonprofit food sales and food service” means the temporary sale or service of food items by an organization at an event sponsored by a county, municipality, or organization or the temporary sale of food items by an organization if such sale is sponsored by a religious, charitable, or nonprofit corporation, including but not limited to churches, schools, clubs, lodges, or other such organizations.

(2) “Organization” means an organization exempt from taxes under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 48-7-25 or under Section 501(d) or paragraphs (1) through (8) or paragraph (10) of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, as that code is defined in Code Section 48-1-2.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-390, enacted by Ga.

L. 1992, p. 1174, § 3; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 3; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 4/SB 345.

26-2-391. Permits for nonprofit food sales and food service at events; duration of permit; issuance of subsequent permits.

(a) A county or municipality shall be authorized to issue permits for the operation of nonprofit food sales and food service at events sponsored by the county, municipality, or an organization. For any permit issued pursuant to this Code section to be valid, the event must be held on property belonging to the sponsoring county, municipality, or organization or on the property of a party that has provided consent for use of such property for such event.

(b) A permit shall be valid for:

(1) A period of up to 120 consecutive hours and another permit

shall not be issued to the organization holding such permit until five days have elapsed from the date of the expiration of the permit; or

(2) A continuous period of up to 12 weeks between May 15 and August 15 and four additional weeks during the calendar year, which may be composed of nonconsecutive periods, coinciding with holidays during which local school systems are not in session, provided that all food items are provided free of charge and the organization does not receive funding from the United States Department of Agriculture to operate a food program.

(c) At the request of the county or municipality issuing a permit pursuant to this Code section or at the request of a county or municipality sponsoring an event pursuant to subparagraph (a)(5)(C) of Code Section 26-2-21 or subparagraph (2)(E) of Code Section 26-2-370, the county board of health shall:

(1) Supply educational materials regarding food safety which may be provided to event organizers and the public; and

(2) Conduct food safety inspections to ensure compliance with the provisions of Code Section 26-2-392.

(d) No fees shall be charged to an organization for the issuance of any permit pursuant to this Code section; provided, however, that the county board of health shall be authorized to impose a fee for inspections performed at the request of the issuing county or municipality. Such fee shall be fixed in a reasonable amount such that the proceeds of the fee do not exceed the total direct and indirect costs of conducting the inspection.

(e) For purposes of this Code section, an event may include the provision of food at a third-party location within the same county.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-391, enacted by Ga. L. 1992, p. 1174, § 3; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 3; Ga. L. 2013, p. 760, § 2/HB 101; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 4/SB 345.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2013 amendment of this Code section, see 30 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2013).

26-2-392. Food safety standards for food sales and food service at events by nonprofit organizations.

(a) This Code section applies to food items prepared and offered for sale or service by organizations at events covered under this article. Food shall be in sound condition, free from spoilage, filth, or other contamination and shall be safe for human consumption. Food shall be obtained from sources that comply with all laws relating to food and food labeling. The use of food in hermetically sealed containers that was not prepared in a licensed food processing establishment is prohibited.

(b) At all times, including while being stored, prepared, displayed, served, or transported, food shall be protected from potential contamination, including dust, insects, rodents, unclean equipment and utensils, unnecessary handling, flooding, drainage, and overhead leakage or overhead drippage from condensation.

(c) Meat, poultry, seafood, and other animal products shall be cooked to at least the safe minimum cooking temperatures recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture. No raw or undercooked animal products shall be served.

(d) Time/temperature control for safety foods to be served at an event shall be maintained at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or less if held cold or 135 degrees Fahrenheit or more if held hot. A thin probe thermometer shall be used to check temperatures of such foods. The preparation of the following time/temperature control for safety foods is prohibited unless the organization has an established hazard control program:

- (1) Pastries filled with cream or synthetic cream;
- (2) Custards;
- (3) Products similar to the products listed in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection; or
- (4) Salads containing meat, poultry, eggs, or fish.

(e) Frozen desserts shall only be produced using commercially pasteurized mixes or ingredients.

(f) Suitable utensils, as needed for serving, must be provided to eliminate bare-hand contact with cooked or ready-to-eat foods. All utensils and equipment shall be washed, rinsed, and sanitized periodically as necessary to prevent contamination or a buildup of food, using separate basins for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing. Disposable utensils may be utilized to meet such requirement.

(g) Ice that is consumed or that contacts food shall be from an approved source and protected from contamination until used. Ice used for cooling stored food shall not be used for human consumption. Food shall be served in an individual-meal type of container and handed to the customer. Food items shall not be transported for sale at any other location or sold, held, or reused at another event.

(h) A convenient handwashing facility shall be available for use by individuals preparing and serving food. This facility shall consist of, at least, warm running water, soap, and individual paper towels. Individuals who prepare or serve food shall not make bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food. Individuals who have a known communicable or transmittable disease, as defined by the Department of Public Health for these purposes, shall not prepare or serve food at an event.

(i) This Code section shall in no way be construed to allow the sale of food items which have been packaged, bottled, or canned in unapproved facilities. Food items prepared in private homes are prohibited; provided, however, that this shall not apply to any food item produced in compliance with a license issued by the Department of Agriculture pursuant to Article 2 of this chapter.

(j) County boards of health are authorized to provide staff assistance to organizations at events covered under this article for the purpose of providing food safety instruction.

(k) Nothing in this Code section shall prohibit an organization from using an offsite kitchen to prepare food for an event permitted under this article, so long as the offsite kitchen complies with the provisions of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-392, enacted by Ga.

L. 1992, p. 1174, § 3; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 3; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 4/SB 345.

26-2-393. Enforcement of article.

The county or municipality issuing a permit for the operation of a nonprofit food sales and food service event shall be authorized to enforce the provisions of this article and any party whose property is used for the operation of a nonprofit food sales or food service event without such party's consent may seek legal and equitable remedies including, but not limited to, damages and injunctive relief against unauthorized users.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-393, enacted by Ga. L. 1992, p. 1174, § 3; Ga. L. 1998, p. 1220, § 3; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-6/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-5/HB 214; Ga. L. 2013, p. 760, § 3/HB 101; Ga. L. 2020, p. 808, § 4/SB 345.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

For article on the 2013 amendment of this Code section, see 30 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2013).

ARTICLE 15

SALE OF MEAT, POULTRY, OR SEAFOOD FROM MOBILE VEHICLES

Administrative rules and regulations.

Additional Regulations Applicable to Retail Sale of Fresh and Frozen Seafood, Meat, Poultry and Other Foods from Mobile Vehicles, Official Compilation of the

Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Rule 40-7-5-.01 et seq.

26-2-410. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Meat" means the carcass or any part of any carcass of any animal or any by-product thereof in any form.

(2) "Mobile vehicle" means any vehicle that is mobile and includes land vehicles, air vehicles, and water vehicles.

(3) "Poultry" means domestic fowl including, but not limited to, water fowl such as geese and ducks; birds which are bred for meat or egg production; game birds such as pheasants, partridge, quail, and grouse, as well as guinea fowl, pigeons, doves, and peafowl; ratites; and all other avian species.

(4) "Seafood" means all fresh or frozen fish and all fresh or frozen shellfish, such as shrimp, oysters, clams, scallops, lobsters, crayfish, and other similar fresh or frozen edible products, but such term shall not include canned or salted seafood.

History.

L. 1998, p. 1377, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81,
Code 1981, § 26-2-410, enacted by Ga. § 26; Ga. L. 2008, p. 458, § 26/SB 364.

26-2-411. Licensing and inspection of mobile vehicles.

(a) Any person who sells, displays for sale, or offers for sale at retail any fresh or frozen meat, poultry, or seafood in, on, or from a mobile vehicle shall prominently display in such mobile vehicle a current and valid license issued by the Department of Agriculture. Such license shall be issued by the department following the satisfactory inspection of such mobile vehicle and the meat, poultry, or seafood offered for sale therefrom to determine compliance with the laws of this state and the rules and regulations of the Commissioner and the payment of a license fee of \$100.00 per vehicle per year or any portion thereof. All licenses shall expire 12 months from the date of issue. Any license may be renewed for any subsequent year upon a satisfactory inspection of the mobile vehicle and its contents and the payment of the license fee. Any fees collected pursuant to this Code section shall be retained pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 45-12-92.1.

(b) As a condition for retaining a license issued pursuant to this article, a mobile vehicle shall be inspected by the department a minimum of once every six months and a stamp, seal, or other marking showing the date of such inspection shall be affixed to the license by the department or its inspector. There shall be no charge or fee for such semi-annual inspection stamp, seal, or other marking. It shall be the duty of the owner or operator of each mobile vehicle licensed or required to be licensed under this article to make such mobile vehicle available to the department for inspection a minimum of once every six months at a reasonable time and place specified by the department. Said place shall be within 100 miles of the county in which the license is issued.

History. L. 1998, p. 1377, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 9,
Code 1981, § 26-2-411, enacted by Ga. § 1-59/HB 1055.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fingerprinting not required. — Of fingerprinting. 1998 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 98-20.
fense under O.C.G.A. § 26-2-411 would
not be designated as one which requires

26-2-412. Rules and regulations.

The Commissioner is authorized to promulgate and adopt such rules and regulations as are necessary to effectuate the purpose of this article.

History.
Code 1981, § 26-2-412, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 1377, § 1.

26-2-413. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.
Code 1981, § 26-2-413, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 1377, § 1.

ARTICLE 16

COMMON-SENSE CONSUMPTION

Law reviews.

For article on 2004 enactment of this article, see 21 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 165 (2004).

26-2-430. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Common-sense Consumption Act.”

History. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469,
Code 1981, § 26-2-430, enacted by Ga. § 1/HB 196.

26-2-431. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Claim” means any claim by or on behalf of a natural person, as well as any derivative or other claim arising therefrom asserted by or on behalf of any other person.

(2) “Federal act” means the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (Title 21 U.S.C. Section 301, et seq., 52 Stat. Section 1040, et seq.).

(3) “Generally known condition allegedly caused by or allegedly likely to result from long-term consumption” means a condition generally known to result or likely to result from the cumulative effect of consumption and not from a single instance of consumption.

(4) “Knowing and willful” means that:

(A) The conduct constituting a violation of federal or state law was committed with the intent to deceive or injure consumers or with actual knowledge that such conduct was injurious to consumers; and

(B) The conduct constituting such violation was not required by regulations, orders, rules, or other pronouncement of, or any statute administered by, a federal, state, or local government agency.

(5) “Other person” means any individual, corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, society, joint-stock company, or other entity, including any governmental entity or private attorney general.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-431, enacted by Ga. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, § 1/HB 196.

26-2-432. Exemption from liability of food distributors for long-term consumption of food.

Except as provided in Code Section 26-2-433, a manufacturer, packer, distributor, carrier, holder, seller, marketer, or advertiser of a food, as defined in Section 201(f) of the federal act, 21 U.S.C. Section 321(f), or an association of one or more such entities, shall not be subject to civil liability arising under any law of this state for any claim arising out of weight gain, obesity, a health condition associated with weight gain or obesity, or other generally known condition allegedly caused by or allegedly likely to result from long-term consumption of food.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-432, enacted by Ga. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, § 1/HB 196.

26-2-433. Exception to nonliability of food distributors.

The limitation of liability provided for in Code Section 26-2-432 shall not preclude civil liability that might otherwise exist under the law of this state where the claimed injury does not arise out of weight gain, obesity, health condition associated with weight gain or obesity, or other generally known condition allegedly caused by or allegedly likely to result from long-term consumption of food but is instead based on other cognizable injuries arising from:

(1) A material violation of an adulteration or misbranding re-

quirement prescribed by statute or regulation of this state or of the United States and the claimed injury was proximately caused by such violation; or

(2) Any other material violation of federal or state statutes or regulations applicable to the manufacturing, marketing, distribution, advertising, labeling, or sale of food, provided that such violation is knowing and willful, the claim is brought by a party authorized to bring suit under such law, and the claimed injury was proximately caused by such violation.

History. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, Code 1981, § 26-2-433, enacted by Ga. § 1/HB 196.

26-2-434. Requirements of complaint.

(a) In any action exempted under paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-2-433, the complaint initiating such action shall state with particularity the following:

(1) The statute, regulation, or other law of this state or of the United States that was allegedly violated;

(2) The facts that are alleged to constitute a material violation of such statute, regulation, or other law; and

(3) The facts alleged to demonstrate that such violation proximately caused actual injury to the plaintiff.

(b) In any action exempted under paragraph (2) of Code Section 26-2-433, in addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section, the complaint initiating such action shall state with particularity facts sufficient to support a reasonable inference that the violation was with intent to deceive or injure consumers or with the actual knowledge that such violation was injurious to consumers.

(c) For purposes of applying this article, the requirements of this Code section are hereby deemed part of the substantive law of this state and not merely in the nature of procedural provisions.

History. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, Code 1981, § 26-2-434, enacted by Ga. § 1/HB 196.

26-2-435. Discovery.

In any action exempted under Code Section 26-2-433, all discovery and other proceedings shall be stayed during the pendency of any motion to dismiss unless the court finds upon the motion of any party that particularized discovery is necessary to preserve evidence or to prevent undue prejudice to that party. During the pendency of any stay of discovery pursuant to this Code section, unless otherwise ordered by

the court, any party to the action with actual notice of the allegations contained in the complaint shall treat all documents, data compilations, including electronically recorded or stored data, and tangible objects that are in the custody or control of such party and that are relevant to the allegations, as if they were the subject of a continuing request for production of documents from an opposing party under Title 9.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-435, enacted by Ga.

L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, § 1/HB 196.

26-2-436. Applicability.

The provisions of this article shall apply to all covered claims pending on July 1, 2005, and all claims filed thereafter, regardless of when the claim arose.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-436, enacted by Ga. L. 2004, p. 767, § 1; Ga. L. 2005, p. 469, § 1/HB 196.

2005, “July 1, 2005,” was substituted for “the effective date of this Code section” in this Code section.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

ARTICLE 17

COOPERATION IN IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL FOOD
SAFETY MODERNIZATION**Administrative rules and regulations.**

Adoption of Reference, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of

Agriculture, Food Division Regulations, Produce Safety Regulations, Rule 40-7-20-.06.

26-2-440. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Administration” means the United States Food and Drug Administration.

(2) “Department” means the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

(3) “Federal act” means the Federal Food Safety Modernization Act, 21 U.S.C. Section 301, et seq.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-440, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 215, § 1/HB 176; Ga. L. 2018, p. 1112, § 26/SB 365; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(6)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “Federal Food Safety Modernization Act” for “federal Food Safety Modernization Act” in paragraph (3).

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

26-2-441. Designation of cooperating agency.

(a) The department, acting by and through its Commissioner, is designated as the state agency responsible for cooperating with the administration under the provisions of the federal act.

(b) In furtherance of its responsibilities under subsection (a) of this Code section, the department may:

(1) Conduct inspections and take other regulatory actions as necessary to assist the administration in enforcement of the federal act; and

(2) Enter into cooperative agreements with the administration to carry out the provisions of the federal act.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-441, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 215, § 1/HB 176; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(7)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July

1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, revised language in subsection (a).

ARTICLE 18**RAW DAIRY****Effective date.**

This article became effective July 1, 2023.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: "This Act shall be known and may be cited as the 'Georgia Raw Dairy Act.'"

Administrative rules and regulations.

Milk and Milk Products, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Rule 40-2-1-.01 et seq.

26-2-450. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Georgia.

(2) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture of the State of Georgia.

(3) "Grade 'A' raw milk for human consumption" means raw milk for human consumption produced by a permitted raw milk for human consumption producer, which meets all health, safety, and labeling standards of this article.

(4) "Raw milk for human consumption" means fluid whole milk in its natural state from healthy cows, or other hooved animals, which is intended for human consumption and has been produced under such

rules and regulations as may be prescribed by or pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-450, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-451. Raw milk for human consumption.

Raw milk for human consumption which is in compliance with this article and in compliance with the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this article may be sold, offered for sale, or delivered by the producer directly to the consuming public for the purpose of human consumption. No raw milk may be sold, offered for sale, or delivered for the purpose of human consumption for wholesale purposes or if it is not in compliance with this article or the standards or rules and regulations prescribed pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-451, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-452. Enforcement by Commissioner.

(a) The Commissioner is charged with the responsibility of enforcing this article.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Commissioner or his or her authorized representative:

(1) To inspect or cause to be inspected, as often as may be deemed practicable, all places where raw milk for human consumption is produced, manufactured, kept, handled, stored, or sold;

(2) To prohibit the production, sale, or distribution of unclean or unwholesome raw milk for human consumption;

(3) To condemn for food purposes all unclean or unwholesome raw milk for human consumption, wherever found;

(4) To take samples anywhere of any raw milk for human consumption or imitation thereof and cause the same to be analyzed or satisfactorily tested;

(5) To weigh and test raw milk for human consumption; and

(6) To compile and publish in print or electronically annually, or at such shorter intervals as he or she may desire, statistics and information concerning all phases of the raw dairy industry in this state.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-452, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

2022, “is” was inserted near the end of paragraph (b)(1).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-2-453. Rules and regulations.

The Commissioner shall have the power to adopt, amend, and repeal rules and regulations to implement and enforce this article; provided, however, that all rules and regulations shall be of uniform application; and provided, further, that all rules and regulations shall be adopted, amended, or repealed in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.” The rules and regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Rules and regulations to provide for the labeling of raw milk for human consumption in such manner so as to indicate that said raw milk complies with this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article;

(2) Rules and regulations to prescribe the specifications of all glassware, including, but not limited to, bottles, pipettes, test tubes, and burrettes, and such other instruments as may be used in the testing of raw milk for human consumption; and

(3) Rules and regulations to prescribe the specifications for the installation and operation of recording thermometers on bulk farm tanks.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-453, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-454. Permit required.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person that does not possess a permit from the department to manufacture, have in storage, sell or offer for sale therein, or offer to give away any raw milk for human consumption. Nothing in this article shall prohibit the storage and personal consumption of raw milk by the owner of an animal or a resident of the premises of production.

(b) Only a person that complies with the requirements of this article shall be entitled to receive and retain such a permit. Permits shall not be transferable to other persons or locations.

(c) Each producer and distributor of raw milk for human consumption shall hold a valid permit issued by the department prior to beginning operation. No permit shall be issued until all parts of the operation meet the requirements of this article.

(d) Application for all licenses and permits provided for in this article shall be made to the Commissioner on such forms as he or she may prescribe. All licenses shall be valid for a period of one year unless revoked or suspended as provided in this article. All licenses shall be renewable upon submission of all required application forms. The Commissioner may deny, refuse, suspend, or revoke any license, after notice and a hearing, for any violation of or failure to comply with this article or the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder; provided, however, that the hearing shall be held in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-454, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(8)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July

1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “person that” for “person who” in the first sentence of subsections (a) and (b).

26-2-455. Examination of raw milk by department; adulterated milk.

(a) Raw milk for human consumption shall be examined by the department as often as necessary to determine that it is not adulterated or misbranded. The department may, upon written notice to the owner or person in charge, place a hold order on any raw milk for human consumption that it determines, or has probable cause to believe, to be unwholesome or otherwise adulterated or misbranded. Under a hold order, raw milk for human consumption shall be permitted to be suitably stored. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or alter a hold order, notice, or tag placed on raw milk for human consumption by the department, and neither such milk nor the containers thereof shall be relabeled, repacked, reprocessed, altered, disposed of, or destroyed without permission of the department except on order by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(b) When the freezing point of milk is greater than -0.525 degrees Celsius, the farm shall be notified that apparently the raw milk contains added water. If a second violation of this freezing point standard occurs within two years, an observed milking or operation of processing shall be conducted and samples analyzed. The freezing point obtained from raw milk collected during the observation shall be used to determine a definite freezing point from the individual farm. A violation of the determined freezing point for a specific operation by over 3 percent within two years of setting the standard shall call for a two-day permit suspension or equivalent.

(c) When raw milk for human consumption is found to be adulterated by the presence of drugs, pesticides, herbicides, or other poisonous substances, it shall be impounded and additional samples analyzed.

Raw milk for human consumption found to be adulterated shall be disposed of until analysis shows the product not to be adulterated. If testing reveals raw milk for human consumption positive for drug residues, the raw milk shall be disposed of in a manner that removes it from the human and animal food chain. The department shall immediately suspend the producer's Grade "A" raw milk for human consumption permit, or equally effective measures shall be taken, to prevent the sale of raw milk for human consumption containing drug residues, and a penalty shall be imposed. Future sales are prohibited until subsequent testing reveals the milk is free of drug residue. The Grade "A" producer's permit may be reinstated to allow the sale of raw milk for human consumption when a representative sample taken from the producer's raw milk is no longer positive for drug residue. Whenever a drug residue test is positive, a recall shall be initiated and an investigation shall be made to determine the cause. The farm inspection must be completed by the department to determine the cause of the residue and actions taken to prevent future violations, including on-farm changes in procedures necessary to prevent future occurrences as recommended by the department.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-455, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-456. Bottling, packaging, and sealing raw milk; labeling.

(a) All Grade "A" raw milk for human consumption shall be bottled, packaged, and sealed at the same location where produced.

(b) All bottles, containers, and packages enclosing raw milk for human consumption shall be labeled in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act as amended, the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) of 1990 and regulations developed thereunder, the Code of Federal Regulations, and in addition shall comply with the applicable requirements of this Code section.

(c) All bottles, containers, and packages enclosing raw milk for human consumption shall be conspicuously marked with:

(1) The words "Grade A Raw" on the exterior surface. Acceptable locations shall include the principal display panel, the secondary or informational panel, or the cap or cover;

(2) The identity of the farm where packaged. This identifying information shall include the name, address, and permit number;

(3) The following information statement, in print no smaller than 12 point font, shall be included on the package: "Warning: This is a

raw milk product that is not pasteurized and may increase the risk of foodborne illness”; and

(4) The common name of the hoofed mammal producing the milk shall precede the name of the milk when the product is made from other than cattle’s milk.

(d) The department shall not permit the use of any misleading marks, words, or endorsements upon the label. The department may permit the use of registered trade designs or similar terms on the bottle cap or label, when, in its opinion, they are not misleading and are not used to obscure the required labeling. Descriptive labeling terms must not be used in conjunction with the Grade “A” designation or name of the raw milk and must not be false or misleading.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-456, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(9)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “This identifying information” for “This identity” at the beginning of the second sentence of paragraph (c)(2).

U.S. Code.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, referred to in this Code section, is codified as 21 U.S.C. § 301 et seq.

The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-535, amended 21 U.S.C. § 343 to add subsections (q) and (r) and amend subsection (i); added 21 U.S.C. § 343-1; amended 21 U.S.C. § 337 and 21 U.S.C. § 371; and made conforming amendments.

26-2-457. Sampling and collection; testing and analysis.

(a) Samples of raw milk for human consumption may be taken for scientific examination for public health purposes, at any reasonable time or place, and examined bacteriologically or for any other public health reason by agents of the department.

(b) Samples of raw milk for human consumption shall be collected and tested prior to a permit being issued.

(c) The department shall collect samples to obtain satisfactory pathogenic testing results prior to:

(1) Receiving a permit and beginning production or distribution;
or

(2) Reinstatement of a permit that has been suspended because of positive results of testing for pathogenic organisms in association with a suspected outbreak of disease.

(d) During any consecutive six months, at least four samples of raw milk for human consumption shall be collected from each producer in at least four separate months, except when three months show a month containing two sampling dates separated by at least 20 days. These samples shall be obtained under the direction of the department or

shall be taken from each producer under the direction of the department and delivered in accordance with this Code section.

(e) Required bacterial counts, somatic cell counts, and cooling temperature checks shall be performed on raw milk for human consumption. In addition, drug tests on each producer's milk shall be conducted at least four times during any consecutive six months.

(f) When multiple samples of the same raw milk for human consumption are collected from the same producer from multiple tanks on the same day, the laboratory results shall be averaged arithmetically by the department and recorded as the official results for that day. This is applicable for bacterial, including standard plate count and coliform, somatic cell count, and temperature determinations only.

(g) Whenever two of the last four consecutive bacterial counts, somatic cell counts, coliform determinations, or cooling temperatures, taken on separate days exceed the standard for the milk required by this article, the department shall send a certified or hand-delivered written notice thereof to the person concerned. This notice shall be in effect so long as two of the last four consecutive samples exceed the standard. An additional sample shall be taken within 21 days of the sending of such notice, but not before the lapse of three days. Immediate suspension of permit shall be implemented whenever the standard is violated by three of the last five bacterial counts, somatic cell counts, coliform determinations, or cooling temperatures.

(h) When sampling for pathogenic organisms is conducted in association with a suspected outbreak of disease, and the samples test positive for pathogenic organisms, the department shall immediately suspend the permit. The permit shall remain suspended until a representative sample containing a minimum of two consecutive milkings are found to be free of pathogenic organisms.

(i) Samples shall be analyzed at an official or appropriate officially designated laboratory. All sampling procedures and required laboratory examinations shall be in substantial compliance with the latest edition of Standard Methods for the Examination of Dairy Products (SMEDP) of the American Public Health Association, and the latest edition of Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists (AOAC) International. Such procedures, including the certification of sample collectors, and examinations shall be evaluated in accordance with the Evaluation of Milk Laboratories.

(j) All violations of bacteria, somatic cell counts, coliform, and cooling temperature standards shall be followed promptly by inspection to determine and correct the cause.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-457, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-458. Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards.

(a) All Grade “A” raw milk for human consumption shall be produced to conform with the following chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards of this Code section:

(1) Raw milk for human consumption shall be cooled to 10 degrees Celsius or less within four hours or less, of the commencement of the first milking, and to 7 degrees Celsius or less within two hours after milking, provided that the blend temperature after the first and subsequent milkings does not exceed 10 degrees Celsius. All finished, processed, and packaged raw milk for human consumption shall be maintained at 7 degrees Celsius or less after processing, during storage, and during transportation;

(2) Individual producer milk shall not exceed bacteria limits of 20,000 per mL;

(3) No positive results on drug residue detection methods required by the department;

(4) Individual producer milk shall not exceed a somatic cell count of 500,000 per mL, except individual producer goat milk shall not exceed 1,000,000 per mL;

(5) Coliform counts shall not exceed 10 per milliliter; and

(6) Individual producer milk shall not contain any organisms of *Escherichia coli*, including, but not limited to, the 0157:H7 strain, *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, or *Campylobacter*. Pathogenic testing for such organisms shall be conducted with samples taken by the department:

(A) Quarterly;

(B) Prior to permitting; and

(C) In association with any outbreak of a foodborne disease.

(b) No process or manipulation other than appropriate refrigeration shall be applied to raw milk for human consumption for the purpose of removing or deactivating microorganisms.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-458, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-459. Sanitation requirements.

All Grade "A" raw milk for human consumption shall be produced to conform with the following sanitation requirements of this Code section:

(1) Lactating animals which show evidence of the secretion of milk with abnormalities in one or more quarters, based upon bacteriological, chemical, or physical examination, shall be milked last or with separate equipment and the milk shall be discarded;

(2) Lactating animals that have been treated with, or have consumed, chemical, medicinal or radioactive agents, which are capable of being secreted in the milk and which, in the judgment of the department, may be deleterious to human health, shall be milked last or with separate equipment and the milk disposed of as the department may direct;

(3) Milk from lactating animals being treated with medicinal agents, which are capable of being secreted in the milk, shall not be offered for sale for such period as is recommended by the attending veterinarian or as indicated on the package label of the medicinal agent;

(4) Milk from lactating animals treated with or exposed to insecticides not approved for use on dairy animals by the United States Environmental Protection Agency shall not be offered for sale;

(5) The department may require additional tests for the detection of milk with abnormalities as it deems necessary;

(6) Bloody, stringy, off-colored milk, or milk that is abnormal to sight or odor shall be handled and disposed of as to preclude the infection of other lactating animals and the contamination of milk utensils;

(7) Lactating animals secreting milk with abnormalities shall be milked last or in separate equipment which effectively prevents the contamination of the wholesome supply. Milking equipment used on animals with abnormalities in their milk shall be maintained clean to reduce the possibility of re-infecting or cross-infection of the dairy animals;

(8) Equipment, utensils, and containers used for the handling of milk with abnormalities shall not be used for the handling of milk to be offered for sale, unless they are first cleaned and effectively sanitized;

(9) Processed animal waste derivatives used as a feed ingredient for any portion of the total ration of the lactating dairy animal shall:

(A) Be properly processed in accordance with at least those requirements contained in the Model Regulations for Processed Animal Wastes developed by the Association of American Feed Control Officials; and

(B) Not contain levels of deleterious substances, harmful pathogenic organisms, or other toxic substances which are secreted in the milk at any level that may be deleterious to human health; and

(10) Unprocessed poultry litter and unprocessed recycled animal body discharges shall not be fed to lactating dairy animals.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-459, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-460. Health status of animals; testing and records.

(a) All raw milk for human consumption within the State of Georgia shall be from healthy animals. Raw milk from unhealthy animals shall not be offered for sale, be given away, or combined with other milk.

(b) All animals producing raw milk for human consumption shall be tested for brucellosis and tuberculosis every 12 months. Animals showing positive by lesions or a positive test shall be reported to the department, and:

(1) Shall be separated, and kept separate, from the remainder of the herd;

(2) A certificate, identifying each animal, signed by a licensed veterinarian and the director of the laboratory making the test, shall be filed with the department;

(3) Shall be retested by a licensed veterinarian at a frequency specified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and test results shall be filed with the department; and

(4) Disposition of diseased animals shall be conducted in accordance with guidelines published by the USDA and shall be reported to the department.

(c) For diseases other than brucellosis and tuberculosis, the department shall require such physical, chemical, or bacteriological tests as it deems necessary. The diagnosis of other diseases in dairy animals shall be based upon the findings of a licensed veterinarian. Any diseased animal disclosed by such test shall be disposed of as the department directs.

(d) Animals shipped into Georgia for the purpose of milking shall be tested for tuberculosis and brucellosis within 30 days prior to being

brought into the state. Brucellosis testing shall not be required for any cattle that have been vaccinated for brucellosis and are under 30 months of age.

(e) Records supporting the tests required in this Code section shall be available to the department and be validated with the signature of a licensed veterinarian.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-460, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-461. Reporting of safety concerns; product recall or notifications to consumers.

Each producer of raw milk for human consumption shall develop and maintain procedures for the notification of regulatory officials, consumer notification, and product recall, and shall implement any of these procedures as necessary with respect to any product for which the producer or the department knows or has reason to believe circumstances exist that may adversely affect its safety for the consumer. If the department determines, based upon representative samples, risk analysis, information provided by the producer, and other information available to the department, that the circumstances present an imminent hazard to the public health and that a form of consumer notice or product recall can effectively avoid or significantly minimize the threat to public health, the department may order the producer to initiate a level of product recall or, if appropriate, issue a form of notification to customers. The producer shall be responsible for disseminating the notice in a manner designed to inform customers who may be affected by the problem.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-461, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-462. Revocation or cancellation of permit or license.

(a) The Commissioner shall be charged with the enforcement of this article and shall have the power and authority, in connection with this and other provisions dealing with milk, food, or food products, to revoke or cancel the permit or license of any person doing business in this state who violates the laws of this state or the rules and regulations made pursuant thereto.

(b) The enforcement methods authorized by this article shall be cumulative of those provided otherwise by law, and the same are not superseded by this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-462, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-463. Furnishing of data and statistics and maintenance of records by operators.

(a) Any person operating under this article shall furnish, upon the request of the Commissioner, such data and statistics as he or she may require.

(b) All persons operating under this article shall keep complete and accurate records of their operations, and the Commissioner shall have free access to all such records.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-463, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-464. Enjoining continuing violations.

Any person, firm, or corporation subject to this article or the other milk laws of this state who violates any of said provisions or any valid rules and regulations made thereunder may be enjoined from such continued violation. The Commissioner is authorized to apply for, and for cause shown the superior court having jurisdiction of the defendant in any such action may grant, injunctive relief, by interlocutory injunction, permanent injunction, or temporary restraining order, as the circumstances may warrant. The proceeding may be maintained notwithstanding the pendency of any civil action and notwithstanding the pendency of or conviction in a criminal proceeding arising from the same transaction. Such action may be maintained without bond. The purpose of this Code section is to create a statutory cause of action by way of injunction, and the Commissioner is authorized to bring such proceedings in the same form and manner and in the same court as other equitable proceedings may be brought. This remedy is not exclusive but is cumulative of other remedies afforded to protect the consuming public from unwholesome products which are economic frauds.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-464, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

26-2-465. Unlawful activities.

It shall be unlawful:

(1) To handle raw milk for human consumption in unclean or unsanitary places or in an unsanitary manner;

(2) To keep, store, or prepare for market any raw milk for human consumption in the same building or enclosure where any hide or fur or any cow, horse, nontraditional livestock, hog, or other livestock is kept;

(3) To handle or ship raw milk for human consumption in unclean or unsanitary vessels;

(4) To expose raw milk for human consumption to flies or to any contaminating influence likely to convey pathogenic or other injurious bacteria;

(5) To use or possess any branded or registered raw milk for human consumption can or container for any purpose other than the handling, storing, or shipping of raw milk for human consumption; provided, however, that no person other than the rightful owner thereof shall use or possess any can, bottle, or other receptacle if such receptacle shall be marked with the brand or trademark of the owner. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit the temporary possession by a business involved in the normal processing, distribution, or retail sale of dairy products of any can, bottle, or other receptacle which is marked with the brand or trademark of another person or entity prior to its return to the rightful owner in the normal course of business, or if purchased from the rightful owner;

(6) To sell or offer for sale raw milk for human consumption that is not pure and fresh and handled with clean utensils;

(7) To sell or offer for sale raw milk for human consumption from diseased or unhealthy animals or which was handled by any person suffering from or coming in contact with persons affected with any contagious disease;

(8) To sell or offer for sale any raw milk for human consumption which shall have been exposed to contamination or into which shall have fallen any unsanitary articles or any foreign substance which would render the raw milk unfit for human consumption; or

(9) To sell or offer for sale raw milk for human consumption which does not comply with the standards and requirements of this article or the rules and regulations promulgated hereunder.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-465, enacted by Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

2022, “does not” was substituted for “do not” in paragraph (9).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-2-466. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-2-466, enacted by Ga. L.
2022, p. 809, § 2/HB 1175.

CHAPTER 3

STANDARDS, LABELING, AND ADULTERATION OF
DRUGS AND COSMETICS

Sec.		Sec.	
26-3-1.	Short title.		in determining whether label or advertisement is misleading.
26-3-2.	Definitions.		
26-3-3.	Prohibited acts.	26-3-15.	Labeling or advertisement of a drug as an antiseptic.
26-3-4.	Detention of adulterated or misbranded drugs and cosmetics.	26-3-16.	Promulgation of regulations; conformity with federal act.
26-3-5.	Duty of prosecuting attorney upon report of violation; notice to possible defendant.	26-3-17.	Inspection of factories, warehouses, establishments, or vehicles; samples and specimens.
26-3-6.	Minor violations.	26-3-18.	Assistance in enforcement from Department of Agriculture or Department of Public Health.
26-3-7.	When a drug or device deemed adulterated.	26-3-19.	Reports and publications by State Board of Pharmacy.
26-3-8.	When a drug or device deemed misbranded.	26-3-20.	Injunctions for violations of Code Section 26-3-3.
26-3-9.	Name and address of manufacturer on label of drugs requiring prescription.	26-3-21.	Construction of chapter.
26-3-10.	Selling, delivering, or giving away of new drugs; exemptions.	26-3-22.	Other laws unaffected by chapter.
26-3-11.	When a cosmetic deemed adulterated.	26-3-23.	Penalty for impeding, obstructing, hindering, or preventing drug agent from performance of duty.
26-3-12.	When a cosmetic deemed misbranded.	26-3-24.	Penalty for violation of chapter.
26-3-13.	When a drug, device, or cosmetic advertisement deemed false.		
26-3-14.	Factors taken into account		

Cross references.

Permits for persons producing and manufacturing serums and vaccines for use in poultry and animals, § 4-9-1 et seq.

Law reviews.

For article, “Liability for Vaccine Injury: The United States, the European Union, and the Developing World,” see 67 Emory L.J. 415 (2018).

For comment, “Process Is Due: The World Health Organization Prequalification of Medicines,” see 68 Emory L.J. 645 (2019).

For article, “Free Speech and Off-Label Rights,” see 54 Ga. L. Rev. 463 (2020).

For article, “Off-Label Speech,” see 72 Emory L.J. 549 (2023).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 47, 189 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S. Drugs and Narcotics, § 210 et seq.

28A C.J.S. Drugs and Narcotics, § 342 et seq.

ALR.

Products liability: sufficiency of evidence to support product misuse defense in actions concerning food, drugs, and other products intended for ingestion, 58 A.L.R.4th 7.

Products liability: sufficiency of evidence to support product misuse defense in actions concerning cosmetics and other personal care products, 58 A.L.R.4th 40.

Products liability: mascara and other eye cosmetics, 63 A.L.R.4th 105.

26-3-1. Short title.

This chapter may be cited as the “Georgia Drug and Cosmetic Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 1; Code 1933, § 79A-1001, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Georgia Drug and Cosmetic Act is not unconstitutional as violating the provisions of Ga. Const. 1945, Art. III, Sec. VII, Para. VIII (see now Ga. Const. 1983, Art. III, Sec. V, Para. III) which prohibits the inclusion of more than one subject

matter in any act of the General Assembly. *Crumley v. Head*, 225 Ga. 246, 167 S.E.2d 651, 1969 Ga. LEXIS 451 (1969) (decided under former Ga. Const. 1945, Art. III, Sec. VII, Para. VIII).

26-3-2. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Advertisement” means all representations disseminated in any manner or by any means other than by labeling for the purpose of inducing or which are likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of drugs, devices, or cosmetics.

(2) “Board” means the State Board of Pharmacy.

(3) “Contaminated with filth” applies to any drug, device, or cosmetic not securely protected from dust, dirt, and, as far as may be necessary by all reasonable means, from all foreign or injurious contamination.

(4) “Cosmetic” means:

(A) Articles intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, sprayed on, introduced into, or otherwise applied to the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance; and

(B) Articles intended for use as a component of any such articles, except that such term shall not include soap.

(5) “Device” (except when used in paragraph (10) of Code Section 26-3-3, paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of Code Section 26-3-8, paragraph (3) of Code Section 26-3-12, and Code Section 26-3-14)

means instruments, apparatus, and contrivances, including their components, parts, and accessories, intended:

(A) For use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in man; or

(B) To affect the structure or any function of the body of man.

(6) “Drug” means:

(A) Articles recognized in the official United States Pharmacopeia, official Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, official National Formulary, or any supplement to any of them;

(B) Articles intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in man;

(C) Articles other than food intended to affect the structure or any function of the body of man; or

(D) Articles intended for use as a component of any article specified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C), but does not include devices or their components, parts, or accessories.

(7) “Federal act” means the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (Title 21 U.S.C. Section 301, et seq.; 52 Stat. 1040, et seq.).

(8) “Immediate container” does not include package liners.

(9) “Label” means a display of written, printed, or graphic matter upon the immediate container of any article; and a requirement made by or under authority of this chapter that any word, statement, or other information appearing on the label shall not be considered to be complied with unless such word, statement, or other information also appears on or is easily legible through any existing outside container or wrapper.

(10) “Labeling” means all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matters:

(A) Upon an article or any of its containers or wrappers; or

(B) Accompanying such article.

(11) “New drug” means:

(A) Any drug the composition of which is such that such drug is not generally recognized among experts qualified by scientific training and experience to evaluate the safety of drugs as safe for use under the conditions prescribed, recommended, or suggested in the labeling thereof; or

(B) Any drug the composition of which is such that such drug, as a result of investigations to determine its safety for use under

such conditions, has become so recognized, but which has not been used to a material extent or for a material time under such conditions other than in such investigations.

(12) “Official compendium” means the official United States Pharmacopeia, official Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, official National Formulary, or any supplement to any of them.

(13) “Person” means an individual, partnership, corporation, company, or association.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 2; Code 1933, § 79A-1002, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(10)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, inserted “of subsection (a)” preceding “of Code Section 26-3-8” in paragraph (5) and substituted

“United States Pharmacopeia” for “United States Pharmacopoeia” in subparagraph (6)(A) and in paragraph (12).

Cross references.

State Board of Pharmacy generally, § 26-4-20 et seq.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2023, “or” was added at the end of subparagraph (6)(C).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1895, § 2103 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Adulterated drugs can include those in official compendia. — Former Code 1895, § 2103 referred only to drugs and preparations recognized by standard compendia, such as the United States Pharmacopoeia or the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, but also to drugs not part of the official compendia. *Lewis v. Brannen*, 6 Ga. App. 419, 65 S.E.

189, 1909 Ga. App. LEXIS 326 (1909) (decided under former Code 1895, § 2103).

Vitamins, minerals, and food supplements may be treated as drugs under the Georgia Chiropractic Practices Act, O.C.G.A. § 43-9-1 et seq., even though such substances are treated as foods under the Georgia Drug and Cosmetic Act, O.C.G.A. § 26-3-1 et seq. *Foster v. Georgia Bd. of Chiropractic Exmrs.*, 257 Ga. 409, 359 S.E.2d 877, 1987 Ga. LEXIS 1037 (1987).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Licensing requirements of former Code 1933, § 79A-102 (see now O.C.G.A. Title 26) do not apply to state and local governments. 1974 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 74-17.

Because O.C.G.A. T. 26, C. 3 applies only to “persons.” — Licensing requirements of former Code 1933, § 79A-102 (see now O.C.G.A. Title 26) are directed toward “persons,” a term defined by former

Code 1933, § 79A-102 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-3-2) to include “an individual, a partnership, a corporation or an association”; if there is no other specific reference to the state or the state’s political subdivision evidencing an intent to include; that section excludes the state and the state’s political subdivisions from the licensing requirements of that title. 1974 Op. Att’y Gen. No. 74-17.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, §§ 2, 6. 25
Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, § 1 et seq. 32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

20 C.J.S., Cosmetic, § 1 et seq. 28
C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 19-21. 37
C.J.S., Fraud, § 85 et seq.

ALR.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

What is "device" within meaning of § 201(h) of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USCS § 321(h)), 129 A.L.R. Fed. 343.

What is "new drug" within meaning of § 201(p) of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USCS § 321(p)), 133 A.L.R. Fed. 229.

26-3-3. Prohibited acts.

The following acts and the causing thereof within this state are prohibited:

(1) The manufacture, sale or delivery, or holding or offering for sale of any drug, device, or cosmetic that is adulterated or misbranded;

(1.1) The holding of any drug, device, or cosmetic that is adulterated or misbranded;

(2) The adulteration or misbranding of any drug, device, or cosmetic;

(3) The receipt in commerce of any drug, device, or cosmetic that is adulterated or misbranded and the delivery or proffered delivery thereof for pay or otherwise;

(4) The sale, delivery for sale, holding for sale, or offering for sale of any article in violation of Code Section 26-3-10;

(5) The dissemination of any false advertisement;

(6) The refusal to permit entry or inspection or to permit the taking of a sample as authorized by Code Section 26-3-17;

(7) The giving of a guarantee or undertaking which is false except by a person who relied on a guarantee or undertaking to the same effect signed by and containing the name and address of the person residing in this state from whom he received the drug, device, or cosmetic in good faith;

(8) The removal or disposal of a detained or embargoed article in violation of Code Section 26-3-4;

(9) The alteration, mutilation, destruction, obliteration, removal

of the whole or any part of the labeling of, or the doing of any other act with respect to a drug, device, or cosmetic if such act is done while such article is held for sale and results in such article being misbranded;

(10) Forging, counterfeiting, simulating, falsely representing, or without proper authority using any mark, stamp, tag, label, or other identification device authorized or required by regulations promulgated under this chapter; and

(11) The use on the labeling of any drug or in any advertisement relating to such drug of any representation or suggestion that any application with respect to such drug is effective under or complies with Code Section 26-3-10.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 3; Code 1933, § 79A-1003, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1996, p. 1609, § 1.

Law reviews.

For article, "Products Liability Law in Georgia: Is Change Coming?," see 10 Ga. St. B.J. 353 (1974).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Failure to warn claims against generic drug manufacturers not preempted by federal law. — Trial court erred by dismissing the plaintiff's state-law failure to warn claims asserted against the generic drug manufacturers because the court improperly concluded

that those claims were preempted by federal law. *PLIVA, Inc. v. Dement*, 335 Ga. App. 398, 780 S.E.2d 735, 2015 Ga. App. LEXIS 772 (2015), cert. denied, No. S16C0503, 2016 Ga. LEXIS 234 (Ga. Mar. 7, 2016).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 19 et seq., 65 et seq.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application of statutes or ordinances directed against false or fraudulent statements in advertisements, 89 A.L.R. 1004.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Liability of manufacturer or seller for injury caused by drug or medicine sold, 79 A.L.R.2d 301.

Liability of manufacturer or seller of hair preparations, cosmetics, soaps and other personal cleansers, and the like, for injury caused by the product, 79 A.L.R.2d 431; 46 A.L.R.4th 1197; 54 A.L.R.4th 574; 63 A.L.R.4th 105.

Validity of statute or ordinance forbidding pharmacist to advertise prices of drugs or medicines, 44 A.L.R.3d 1301.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

Common-law right of action for damage sustained by plaintiff in consequence of sale or gift of intoxicating liquor or habit-forming drug to another, 97 A.L.R.3d 528; 62 A.L.R.4th 16.

26-3-4. Detention of adulterated or misbranded drugs and cosmetics.

(a) Whenever a duly authorized agent of the State Board of Pharmacy finds or has probable cause to believe that any drug or cosmetic is adulterated or so misbranded as to be dangerous or fraudulent within the meaning of this chapter, he shall affix to such article a tag or other appropriate marking giving notice that such article is, or is suspected of being, adulterated or misbranded and has been detained or embargoed and warning all persons not to remove or dispose of such article by sale or otherwise until permission for removal or disposal is given by the agent or the court. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or dispose of such detained or embargoed article by sale or otherwise without permission.

(b) When an article detained or embargoed under subsection (a) of this Code section has been found by such agent to be adulterated or misbranded, he shall petition the judge of the superior court of the appropriate county for an action for condemnation of such article. When such agent has found that an article so detained or embargoed is not adulterated or misbranded, he shall remove the tags or other markings.

(c) If the court finds that a detained or embargoed article is adulterated or misbranded, such article shall, after entry of the decree, be destroyed at the expense of the claimant thereof under the supervision of the State Board of Pharmacy; and all court costs and fees, storage, and other proper expenses shall be taxed against the claimant of such articles or his agent, provided that when the adulteration or misbranding can be corrected by proper labeling or processing of the article, the court, after entry of the decree and after such costs, fees, and expenses have been paid and a good and sufficient bond, conditioned that such article shall be so labeled or processed, has been executed, may by proper order direct that such article be delivered to the claimant thereof for such labeling or processing under the supervision of an agent of the State Board of Pharmacy. The expense of such supervision shall be paid by the claimant. Such article shall be returned to the claimant of the article on representation to the court by the State Board of Pharmacy that the article is no longer in violation of this chapter and that the expense of such supervision has been paid.

(d) Whenever the State Board of Pharmacy or any of its authorized agents shall find in any room, building, vehicle for transportation, or other structure any drug, device, or cosmetic which is unsound or contains any filthy, decomposed, or putrid substance or that may be poisonous or deleterious to health or otherwise unsafe, the same being declared to be a nuisance, the State Board of Pharmacy or its authorized agents shall immediately condemn or destroy the same.

History. § 79A-1005, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 6; Code 1933,

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S. 28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 171-173.
ALR. branding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Right to jury trial in case of seizure of property alleged to be illegally used, 17 A.L.R. 568; 50 A.L.R. 97.

Provisions of statutes against mis- Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-5. Duty of prosecuting attorney upon report of violation; notice to possible defendant.

It shall be the duty of each prosecuting attorney to whom the State Board of Pharmacy reports any violation of this chapter to cause appropriate criminal proceedings to be instituted in the appropriate court without delay and to prosecute same in the manner provided by law. Before any violation of this chapter is reported to any prosecuting attorney for the institution of a criminal proceeding, the person against whom such proceeding is contemplated shall be given appropriate notice and an opportunity to present his views before the State Board of Pharmacy or its designated agent, either orally or in writing, in person, or by attorney with regard to such contemplated proceedings.

History. § 79A-1006, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 7; Code 1933,

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Board can still notify federal authorities when violator outside jurisdiction. — When the alleged violator is outside the jurisdiction of the State Board of Pharmacy, the recourse of the Board lies in the notification of the federal au-
thorities charged with the enforcement of federal laws in the area of nonmailable items and the regulation of drugs, medicines, and poisons. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-121.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S. 28 C.J.S. Drugs and Narcotics, § 188 et seq.

26-3-6. Minor violations.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as requiring the State Board of Pharmacy to report minor violations of this chapter for the institution of proceedings under this chapter, whenever the State Board

of Pharmacy believes that the public interest will be adequately served in the circumstances by a suitable written notice or warning.

History. § 79A-1007, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 8; Code 1933, 296, § 1.

26-3-7. When a drug or device deemed adulterated.

A drug or device shall be deemed to be adulterated:

(1)(A) If it consists in whole or in part of any filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance;

(B) If it has been produced, prepared, packed, or held under unsanitary conditions whereby it may have been rendered injurious to health;

(C) If it is a drug and its container is composed in whole or in part of any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render the contents injurious to health; or

(D) If it is a drug and it bears or contains for purposes of coloring only a coal-tar color other than one from a batch certified under the authority of the federal act;

(2) If it purports to be or is represented as a drug the name of which is recognized in an official compendium and its strength differs from or its quality or purity falls below the standard set forth in such compendium. Such determination as to strength, quality, or purity shall be made in accordance with the tests or methods of assay set forth in such compendium or, in the absence of or inadequacy of such tests or methods of assay, those prescribed under authority of the federal act. No drug defined in an official compendium shall be deemed to be adulterated under this paragraph because it differs from the standard of strength, quality, or purity therefor set forth in such compendium if its difference in strength, quality, or purity from such standard is plainly stated on its label. Whenever a drug is recognized in both the United States Pharmacopeia and the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, it shall be subject to the requirements of the United States Pharmacopeia unless it is labeled and offered for sale as a homeopathic drug, in which case it shall be subject to the provisions of the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States and not to those of the United States Pharmacopeia;

(3) If it is not subject to the provisions of paragraph (2) of this Code section and its strength differs from or its purity or quality falls below that which it purports or is represented to possess; or

(4) If it is a drug and any substance has been:

(A) Mixed or packed therewith so as to reduce its quality or strength; or

(B) Substituted wholly or in part therefor.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 9; Code 1933, § 79A-1008, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(11)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted

“United States Pharmacopeia” for “United States Pharmacopoeia” three times in the last sentence of paragraph (2).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1985, a comma was deleted following “differs from” in the first sentence of paragraph (2).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1895, § 2103 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Adulterated drugs can include those not in official compendia. — Former Code 1895, § 2103 referred not

only to drugs and preparations recognized by the standard United States or Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia but also to drugs not part of the official compendia. *Lewis v. Brannen*, 6 Ga. App. 419, 65 S.E. 189, 1909 Ga. App. LEXIS 326 (1909) (decided under former Code 1895, § 2103).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

25 Am. Jur. 2d, *Drugs and Controlled Substances*, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., *Drugs and Narcotics*, § 14 et seq.

26-3-8. When a drug or device deemed misbranded.

(a) A drug or device shall be deemed to be misbranded:

- (1) If its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;
- (2) If in package form unless it bears a label containing:

(A) The name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor; and

(B) An accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count, provided that reasonable variations shall be permitted and exemptions as to small packages shall be established by regulations prescribed by the State Board of Pharmacy;

(3) If any word, statement, or other information required by or under authority of this chapter to appear on the label or labeling is not prominently placed thereon with conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices in the labeling and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use;

(4) If it is for use by man and contains any quantity of the narcotic or hypnotic substance alphaeucaine, barbituric acid, betaeucaine, bromal, cannabis, carbromal, chloral, coca, cocaine, codeine, heroin, marijuana, morphine, opium, paraldehyde, peyote, sulfonmethane, or any chemical derivative of such substance which has been found after investigation by the State Board of Pharmacy to be and by regulations under this chapter designated as habit forming, or any synthetic narcotic or drug unless its label bears the name and quantity or proportion of such substance or derivative and in juxtaposition therewith the statement "Warning — May be habit forming";

(5) If it is a drug and is not designated solely by a name recognized in an official compendium unless its label bears:

(A) The common or usual name of the drug if there is such; and

(B) In case it is fabricated from two or more ingredients, the common or usual name of each active ingredient including the kind and quantity or proportion of any alcohol and also including, whether active or not, the name and quantity or proportion of any bromides, ether, chloroform, acetanilid, acetophenetidin, amidopyrine, antipyrine, atropine, hyoscine, hyoscyamine, arsenic, digitalis, glucosides, mercury, ouabain, strophanthin, strychnine, thyroid, or any derivative or preparation of any such substance contained therein, provided that to the extent that compliance with the requirements of this subparagraph is impracticable, exemptions shall be established by regulations promulgated by the State Board of Pharmacy;

(6)(A) Unless its labeling bears:

(i) Adequate directions for use; and

(ii) Adequate warnings against use by children or in those pathological conditions where its use may be dangerous to health or against unsafe dosage or methods or duration of administration or application in such manner and form as are necessary for the protection of users.

(B) Where any requirement of division (i) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph as applied to any drug or device is not necessary for the protection of the public health, the State Board of Pharmacy shall promulgate regulations exempting such drug or device from such requirements;

(7) If it is purported to be a drug the name of which is recognized in an official compendium unless it is packaged and labeled as prescribed therein, provided that the method of packing may be modified with consent of the State Board of Pharmacy. Whenever a drug is recognized in both the United States Pharmacopeia and the

Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States, it shall be subject to the requirements of the United States Pharmacopeia with respect to packaging and labeling unless it is labeled and offered for sale as a homeopathic drug, in which case it shall be subject to the provisions of the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States and not to those of the United States Pharmacopeia;

(8) If it has been found by the State Board of Pharmacy to be a drug liable to deterioration unless it is packaged in such form and manner and its label bears a statement or such precautions as the State Board of Pharmacy shall by regulations require as necessary for the protection of public health. No such regulation shall be established for any drug recognized in an official compendium until the State Board of Pharmacy shall have informed the appropriate body charged with the revision of such compendium of the need for such packaging or labeling requirements and such body shall have failed within a reasonable time to prescribe such requirements;

(9)(A) If it is a drug and its container is so made, formed, or filled as to be misleading;

(B) If it is an imitation of another drug; or

(C) If it is offered for sale under the name of another drug;

(10) If it is dangerous to health when used in the dosage or with the frequency or duration prescribed, recommended, or suggested in the labeling thereof; or

(11) If it is a drug intended for use by man which:

(A) Is a habit-forming drug to which paragraph (4) of this subsection applies;

(B) Because of its toxicity or other potentiality for harmful effect, the method of use, or the collateral measures necessary to its use is not safe for use except under the supervision of a practitioner licensed by law to administer such drug; or

(C) Is limited by an effective application under Section 505 of the federal act to use under the professional supervision of a practitioner licensed by law to administer such drug unless it is dispensed only:

(i) Upon a written prescription of a practitioner licensed by law to administer such drug;

(ii) Upon an oral prescription of such practitioner which is reduced promptly to writing and filed by the pharmacist; or

(iii) By refilling any such written or oral prescription if such refilling is authorized by the prescriber either in the original

prescription or by oral order which is reduced promptly to writing and filed by the pharmacist.

(b) Any drug dispensed by filling or refilling a written or oral prescription of a practitioner licensed by law to administer such drug shall be exempt from the requirements of this Code section except paragraphs (1) and (9) of subsection (a) of this Code section if the drug bears a label containing the name and address of the dispenser, the serial number and date of the prescription or of its filling, the name of the prescriber, and, if stated in the prescription, the name of the patient and the directions for use and cautionary statements, if any, contained in such prescription. This exemption shall not apply to any drug dispensed in the course of the conduct of a business of dispensing drugs pursuant to diagnosis by mail or to a drug dispensed in violation of paragraph (11) of subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1906, p. 83, § 5; Civil Code 1910, § 2104; Ga. L. 1913, p. 44, §§ 1, 2; Code 1933, § 42-110; Ga. L. 1947, p. 1463, § 2; Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 10; Code 1933, § 79A-1009, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26; Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 26; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(12)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “United States Pharmacopeia” for “United States Pharmacopoeia” three times in paragraph (a)(7).

Cross references.

Deceptive trade practices generally, § 10-1-370 et seq.

Controlled substances and dangerous drugs, § 16-13-1 et seq.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1985, in subparagraph (a)(2)(B), “, provided that” was substituted for “; pro-

vided, that” and a semicolon was substituted for a period following “Pharmacy”; in paragraph (a)(4), a comma was deleted following “Pharmacy”; and, in subparagraph (a)(5)(B), a comma was deleted following “such substance”.

U.S. Code.

Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, referred to in subparagraph (a)(11)(C) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 355.

Law reviews.

For comment on *Givens v. Lederle*, 556 F.2d 1341 (5th Cir. 1977) which extends a manufacturer’s duty to warn physicians about affects the drugs may have on third person bystanders, see 29 Mercer L. Rev. 643 (1978).

For note, “Does the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Compensation Act Really Prohibit Design Defect Claims?: Examining Federal Preemption in Light of *American Home Products Corp. v. Ferrari*,” see 26 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 617 (2010).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Failure to warn claims against generic drug manufacturers not preempted by federal law. — Trial court erred by dismissing the plaintiff’s state-law failure to warn claims asserted against the generic drug manufacturers because the court improperly concluded

that those claims were preempted by federal law. *PLIVA, Inc. v. Dement*, 335 Ga. App. 398, 780 S.E.2d 735, 2015 Ga. App. LEXIS 772 (2015), cert. denied, No. S16C0503, 2016 Ga. LEXIS 234 (Ga. Mar. 7, 2016).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 14.

ALR.

Constitutionality of requirement of disclosure by label of materials or ingredients of articles sold or offered for sale, 57 A.L.R. 686.

Mistake as to chemical or product furnished or misdescription thereof by label or otherwise as basis of liability for personal injury or death resulting from combination with other chemical, 123 A.L.R. 939.

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Liability of manufacturer or seller for injury or death allegedly caused by failure to warn regarding danger in use of vaccine or prescription drug, 94 A.L.R.3d 748.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-9. Name and address of manufacturer on label of drugs requiring prescription.

(a) Any drug product designed for human usage which is branded as follows:

“Caution: Federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription” shall bear on the label the name and address of the manufacturer.

(b) For the purposes of this Code section, the term “manufacturer” includes any of the following parties:

(1) The person who is responsible for the production of the drug and maintains control over the processing of same;

(2) The person to whose specifications the drug is manufactured and who reviews adherence to such specifications through a drug testing program;

(3) The person who manufactures the drug product and then packs and ships the said drug products on behalf of the person designated on the label as being responsible for the drug product; or

(4) The person who manufactures the drug product and which product is distributed by the person designated on the label as being responsible for the drug without testing to determine adherence to specifications for manufacture.

(c) Where the drug product is manufactured by an affiliated or subsidiary company of the distributor, the name and address of the distributor only need appear.

History.

Code 1933, § 79A-1009.1, enacted by Ga. L. 1975, p. 691, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 14.

26-3-10. Selling, delivering, or giving away of new drugs; exemptions.

(a) No person shall sell, deliver, offer for sale, hold for sale, or give away any new drug unless:

(1) An application with respect thereto has become effective under Section 505 of the federal act; or

(2) When not subject to the federal act unless such drug has been tested and has not been found to be unsafe for use under the conditions prescribed, recommended, or suggested in the labeling thereof and prior to selling or offering such drug for sale, there has been filed with the State Board of Pharmacy an application setting forth:

(A) Full reports of investigations which have been made to show whether or not such drug is safe for use;

(B) A full list of the articles used as components of such drug;

(C) A full statement of the composition of such drug;

(D) A full description of the methods used in and the facilities and controls used for the manufacture, processing, and packing of such drug;

(E) Such samples of such drug and of the articles used as components thereof as the State Board of Pharmacy may require; and

(F) Specimens of the labeling proposed to be used for such drug.

(b) An application provided for in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall become effective 60 days after the filing thereof, except that if the State Board of Pharmacy finds after due notice to the applicant and after giving him an opportunity for a hearing that the drug is not safe for use under the conditions prescribed, recommended, or suggested in the proposed labeling thereof, he shall prior to the effective date of the application issue an order refusing to permit the application to become effective.

(c) This Code section shall not apply:

(1) To a drug intended solely for investigational use by experts qualified by scientific training and experience to investigate the safety in drugs, provided the drug is plainly labeled "For investigational use only"; or

(2) To a drug sold in the state at any time prior to the enactment of this chapter or introduced into interstate commerce at any time prior to the enactment of the federal act; or

(3) To any drug manufactured, labeled, and sold for veterinary purposes.

(d) An order refusing to permit an application under this Code section to become effective may be revoked by the State Board of Pharmacy.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 11; Code 1933, § 79A-1010, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.

U.S. Code.

Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug,

and Cosmetic Act, referred to in paragraph (a)(1) of this Code section, is codified at 21 U.S.C. § 355.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 14 et seq., 51 et seq.

ALR.

What is "new drug" within meaning of § 201(p) of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USCS § 321(p)), 133 A.L.R. Fed. 229.

26-3-11. When a cosmetic deemed adulterated.

(a) A cosmetic shall be deemed to be adulterated:

(1) If it bears or contains any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render it injurious to users under the conditions of use prescribed in the labeling or advertisement thereof or under such conditions of use as are customary or usual, provided that this paragraph shall not apply to coal-tar hair dye, the label of which bears the following legend conspicuously displayed thereon: "Caution — This product contains ingredients which may cause skin irritation on certain individuals and a preliminary test according to accompanying directions should first be made. This product must not be used for dyeing the eyelashes or eyebrows; to do so may cause blindness," and the labeling of which bears adequate directions for such preliminary testing;

(2) If it consists in whole or in part of any filthy, putrid, or decomposed substance;

(3) If it has been produced, prepared, packed, or held under unsanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth or whereby it may have been rendered injurious to health;

(4) If its container is composed, in whole or in part, of any poisonous or deleterious substance which may render the contents injurious to health; or

(5) If it is not a hair dye and it bears or contains a coal-tar color other than one from a batch which has been certified under authority of the federal act.

(b) For the purpose of paragraphs (1) and (5) of subsection (a) of this Code section, the term "hair dye" shall not include eyelash dyes or eyebrow dyes.

History. § 79A-1011, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 12; Code 1933, 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S. injury or death allegedly caused by failure
2 C.J.S., Adulteration, § 1 et seq. to warn regarding danger in use of vaccine
ALR. or prescription drug, 94 A.L.R.3d 748.
Liability of manufacturer or seller for

26-3-12. When a cosmetic deemed misbranded.

A cosmetic shall be deemed to be misbranded:

(1) If its labeling is false or misleading in any particular;

(2) If in package form unless it bears a label containing:

(A) The name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor; and

(B) An accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count, provided that reasonable variations shall be permitted and exemptions as to small packages shall be established by regulations prescribed by the State Board of Pharmacy;

(3) If any word, statement, or other information required by or under authority of this chapter to appear on the label or labeling is not prominently placed thereon with such conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements, designs, or devices in the labeling and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use; or

- (4) If its container is so made, formed, or filled as to be misleading.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 13; Code 1933, § 79A-1012, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26.

Cross references.

Deceptive trade practices generally, § 10-1-370 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**ALR.**

Provisions of statutes against misbranding or false labeling of food, drug, or

cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

26-3-13. When a drug, device, or cosmetic advertisement deemed false.

(a) An advertisement of a drug, device, or cosmetic shall be deemed to be completely false if it is false or misleading in any particular.

(b) For the purpose of this chapter the advertisement of a drug or device representing it to have any effect on albuminuria, appendicitis, arteriosclerosis, blood poisoning, bone disease, Bright's disease, cancer, carbuncles, cholecystitis, diabetes, diphtheria, dropsy, erysipelas, gallstones, heart and vascular diseases, high blood pressure, mastoiditis, measles, meningitis, mumps, nephritis, otitis media, paralysis, pneumonia, poliomyelitis or infantile paralysis, prostate gland disorders, pyelitis, scarlet fever, sexual impotence, sinus infection, smallpox, tuberculosis, tumors, typhoid, uremia, or sexually transmitted disease shall also be deemed to be false, except that no advertisement not in violation of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be deemed to be false under this subsection if it is disseminated only to members of the medical, dental, or veterinary professions, appears only in the scientific periodicals of these professions, or is disseminated only for the purpose of public health education by persons not commercially interested directly or indirectly in the sale of such drugs or devices, provided that whenever the State Board of Pharmacy determines that an advance in medical science has made any type of self-medication safe as to any of the diseases named in this subsection, the board shall by regulation authorize the advertisement of drugs having curative or therapeutic effect for such disease subject to such conditions and restrictions as the board may deem necessary in the interest of public health, provided that this subsection shall not be construed as indicating that self-medication for diseases other than those named herein is safe or efficacious.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 14; Code 1933, § 79A-1013, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26; Ga. L. 2020, p. 55, § 8/SB 372; Ga. L. 2023, p.

730, § 4(b)(13)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted "any

effect on" for "any effect in" near the beginning of subsection (b).

Cross references.

False advertising generally, § 10-1-420 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, §§ 2, 6. 32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 75 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 14-20. 37 C.J.S., Fraud, § 67 et seq.

ALR.

Validity, construction, and application

of statutes or ordinances directed against false or fraudulent statements in advertisements, 89 A.L.R. 1004.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-14. Factors taken into account in determining whether label or advertisement is misleading.

If an article is alleged to be misbranded because the labeling is misleading or if an advertisement is alleged to be false because it is misleading, then in determining whether the labeling or advertisement is misleading there shall be taken into account, among other things not only representations made or suggested by statement, word, design, device, sound, or any combination thereof, but also the extent to which the labeling or advertisement fails to reveal facts material in the light of such representations or material with respect to consequences which may result from the use of the article to which the labeling or advertisement relates under the conditions of use prescribed in the labeling or advertisement thereof or under such conditions of use as are customary or usual.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 2; Code 1933,

§ 79A-1002, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, §§ 2, 6. 25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, § 1 et seq. 32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

20 C.J.S., Cosmetic, § 1 et seq. 28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 2, 19-21. 37 C.J.S., Fraud, § 85 et seq.

ALR.

Provisions of statutes against mis-

branding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-15. Labeling or advertisement of a drug as an antiseptic.

The representation of a drug in its labeling or advertisement as an antiseptic shall be considered to be a representation that it is a germicide, except in the case of a drug purporting to be or represented as an antiseptic for inhibitory use as a wet dressing, ointment, dusting powder, or such other use as involves prolonged contact with the body.

History. § 79A-1002, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 2; Code 1933, 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, §§ 2, 6. 25
Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Sub-
stances, § 1 et seq. 32 Am. Jur. 2d, False
Pretenses, § 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

20 C.J.S., Cosmetic, § 1 et seq. 28 C.J.S.,
Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 2, 19-21. 37
C.J.S., Fraud, § 85 et seq.

ALR.

Provisions of statutes against mis-

branding or false labeling of food, drug, or
cosmetic products, as applicable to litera-
ture other than that attached to product
itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Promotional efforts directed toward
prescribing physician as affecting pre-
scription drug manufacturer's liability for
product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-16. Promulgation of regulations; conformity with federal act.

(a) The authority to promulgate regulations for the efficient enforce-
ment of this chapter is vested in the State Board of Pharmacy. The
board is authorized to make the regulations promulgated under this
chapter conform insofar as practicable with those promulgated under
the federal act.

(b) No drug, device, or cosmetic which is subject to and complies with
regulations promulgated under the provisions of the Federal Food,
Drug, and Cosmetic Act relating to adulteration and misbranding shall
be deemed to be adulterated or misbranded in violation of this chapter
because of its failure to comply with regulations promulgated under
this chapter insofar as the regulations are in conflict with regulations
relating to adulteration and misbranding under the Federal Food,
Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

History. § 79A-1014, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 15; Code 1933, 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled
Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 14 et
seq.

26-3-17. Inspection of factories, warehouses, establishments, or vehicles; samples and specimens.

The State Board of Pharmacy or its duly authorized agent shall have free access at all reasonable times to any factory, warehouse, or establishment in which drugs, devices, or cosmetics are manufactured, processed, packed, or held for introduction into commerce or to enter any vehicle being used to transport or hold such drugs, devices, or cosmetics in commerce for the purpose:

(1) Of inspecting such factory, warehouse, establishment, or vehicle to determine if any of the provisions of this chapter are being violated; or

(2) To secure samples or specimens of any drug, device, or cosmetic after paying or offering to pay for such sample. It shall be the duty of the State Board of Pharmacy to make or cause to be made examinations of samples secured under this Code section to determine whether or not this chapter is being violated.

History. § 79A-1015, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.
Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 16; Code 1933, 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 14.

26-3-18. Assistance in enforcement from Department of Agriculture or Department of Public Health.

In addition to the remedies provided in this chapter and to provide for more efficient enforcement of this chapter, the State Board of Pharmacy or the director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency may ask the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Public Health for assistance; and, in such event, either or both such departments may render such assistance. Any employee or agent of either such department engaged in the rendering of such assistance shall be an authorized agent of the board.

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 16A; Code 1933, § 79A-1016, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1977, p. 625, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

26-3-19. Reports and publications by State Board of Pharmacy.

(a) The State Board of Pharmacy may cause to be published from

History.

Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, § 2; Code 1933, § 79A-1002, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.

Cross references.

Insurance coverage for prescription drugs used in manner different than use authorized by FDA, § 33-24-59.11.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Georgia Drug and Cosmetic Act is not unconstitutional as violating the provisions of Ga. Const. 1945, Art. III, Sec. VII, Para. VIII (see now Ga. Const. 1983, Art. III, Sec. V, Para. III), which prohibits the inclusion of more than one subject

matter in any act of the General Assembly. *Crumley v. Head*, 225 Ga. 246, 167 S.E.2d 651, 1969 Ga. LEXIS 451 (1969) (decided under former Ga. Const. 1945, Art. III, Sec. VII, Para. VIII).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

3 Am. Jur. 2d, Advertising, §§ 2, 6. 25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, § 1 et seq. 32 Am. Jur. 2d, False Pretenses, § 79 et seq.

C.J.S.

20 C.J.S., Cosmetic, § 1 et seq. 28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 2, 14-20. 37 C.J.S., Fraud, § 85 et seq.

ALR.

Provisions of statutes against mis-

branding or false labeling of food, drug, or cosmetic products, as applicable to literature other than that attached to product itself, 143 A.L.R. 1453.

Promotional efforts directed toward prescribing physician as affecting prescription drug manufacturer's liability for product-caused injury, 94 A.L.R.3d 1080.

26-3-22. Other laws unaffected by chapter.

(a) This chapter shall be cumulative and supplemental to any and all existing laws relating to the subject matter of drugs. Specifically, nothing contained in this chapter shall be so construed as to relieve any person, firm, or corporation from complying with any requirements as prescribed by Chapter 4 of this title, Article 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 16, the "Dangerous Drug Act," Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16, the "Georgia Controlled Substances Act," or Title 21 C.F.R. 210, the federal "current good manufacturing practices in manufacturing, processing, packing, or holding of drugs: general"; provided, however, that any testing equipment used to determine whether a controlled substance has been adulterated and contains a synthetic opioid shall not be considered a drug related object as defined by Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16.

(b) Nothing contained in this chapter shall amend, alter, supersede, or replace the laws of this state relative to feed, food, animal remedies, hog cholera serum or virus, drugs permitted to be added to feeds, bottling supplies, nor the duty and authority of the Commissioner of Agriculture.

History.

Code 1933, § 79A-1018, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1986, p. 1555, § 8; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 8/HB 1175; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(14)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2022 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, added the last sentence in subsection (a).

The 2023 amendment, effective July

1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “general”; provided, however, that any” for “general.’ Except that any” in the middle of subsection (a).

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 809, § 1/HB 1175, not codified by the General Assembly, provides: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Georgia Raw Dairy Act.’”

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1 is not unconstitutional as violating the provisions of Ga. Const. 1945, Art. III, Sec. VII, Para. VIII (see now Ga. Const. 1983, Art. III, Sec. V, Para. III), which prohibits the

inclusion of more than one subject matter in any act of the General Assembly. *Crumley v. Head*, 225 Ga. 246, 167 S.E.2d 651, 1969 Ga. LEXIS 451 (1969).

26-3-23. Penalty for impeding, obstructing, hindering, or preventing drug agent from performance of duty.

Any manufacturer, dealer, wholesaler, or other person who shall impede, obstruct, hinder, or otherwise prevent or attempt to prevent any drug agent or other person in the performance of his duty in collecting samples or otherwise in connection with this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1933, § 79A-9914, enacted by Ga.

L. 1967, p. 296, § 1; Ga. L. 1977, p. 625, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 65-68, 188 et seq.

26-3-24. Penalty for violation of chapter.

Any person who violates this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1933, § 79A-9912, enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 188 et seq.

property alleged to be illegally used, 17 A.L.R. 568; 50 A.L.R. 97.

ALR.

Right to jury trial in case of seizure of

Sec.

26-4-61. Temporary suspension of license; notice; disciplinary hearings.

26-4-62. Penalty for violation of chapter.

Article 5

Prescription Drugs

26-4-80. License required for practice of pharmacy; dispensing of prescription drugs; prescription drug orders; electronically transmitted drug orders; refills; Schedule II controlled substance prescriptions.

26-4-80.1. Use of security paper for hard copy prescription drug orders for Schedule II controlled substances.

26-4-81. Substitution of generic drugs or interchangeable biological products for brand name drugs and prescribed biological products.

26-4-82. Duties requiring professional judgment; responsibilities of licensed pharmacist.

26-4-83. Patient record systems.

26-4-84. Restriction of license for failure to review patient records and prescription drug orders.

26-4-85. Patient counseling; optimizing drug therapy.

26-4-86. Compounding and distribution of drug products.

26-4-87. Storage and handling of controlled substances and dangerous drugs.

26-4-88. Restrictions on dispensing of medicines, drugs, or poisons; functions which require the professional judgment of a pharmacist.

26-4-89. Selling drugs in vending machines prohibited; remote automated medication system excluded.

26-4-90. Remuneration for professional pharmacy care services.

Article 6

Pharmacies

Sec.

26-4-110. Pharmacy licenses; applications; fees; investigations; prescription department requirements.

26-4-111. Licensure procedures for pharmacies; non-transferability; minimum standards.

26-4-112. Occurrences requiring immediate notification to board.

26-4-113. Wholesale distributors; licensing requirements; suspension or revocation of license; reinstatement.

26-4-114. Special pharmacy permits.

26-4-114.1. Nonresident pharmacy permits; application; requirements.

26-4-115. Wholesale drug distributors; registration; fees; reports of excessive purchases; penalty for violations; transfers of drugs.

26-4-115.1. Requirement that certain wholesale distributors of controlled substances and dangerous drugs provide price and quantity information.

26-4-116. Emergency service providers; contracts with issuing pharmacy; record keeping; inspections.

26-4-116.1. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine for schools; pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions.

26-4-116.2. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe opioid antagonists; pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions; immunity from liability.

26-4-116.3. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe levalbuterol sulfate or abuterol sulfate for schools;

Sec.

pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions.

26-4-116.4. Undesignated ready-to-use glucagon for schools.

26-4-117. Duty to prosecute violations.

26-4-118. Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights; recoupment of disputed funds; appeals process for unfavorable reports; final audit report; investigative audits based on criminal offenses.

26-4-119. Pharmacy anti-steering and transparency; prohibited activities.

Article 7

Practitioners of the Healing Arts

26-4-130. Dispensing drugs; compliance with labeling and packaging requirements; records available for inspection by board; renewal of licenses.

26-4-131. Examination of food, drug, and cosmetic specimens; violations of federal law.

Article 8

Third-Party Prescription Programs

26-4-140. Short title.

26-4-141. Legislative findings.

26-4-142. Definitions.

26-4-143. Approval of program by Commissioner; exemptions.

26-4-144. Claim reimbursements to participating pharmacies.

26-4-145. Excessive charges to enrollees prohibited.

26-4-146. Administrator registration.

26-4-147. Liability of enrollees.

26-4-148. Penalties.

Article 9

Poisons

26-4-160. Sales and labeling.

26-4-161. Procedure on sale or delivery of listed poisons.

26-4-162. Prescriptions by practitioners of the healing arts.

26-4-163. Penalty.

Article 10

Nuclear Pharmacy Law

Sec.

26-4-170. Short title.

26-4-171. Definitions.

26-4-172. License requirements generally.

26-4-173. Nuclear pharmacist license; applicant requirements.

26-4-174. Nuclear pharmacy operators permit; requirements.

26-4-175. Equipment requirements.

26-4-176. Limiting, suspending, or revoking license.

26-4-177. Grounds for refusal to grant license.

26-4-178. Authorized to promulgate rules.

26-4-179. Authority of department.

Article 11

Utilization of Unused Prescription Drugs

26-4-190 through 26-4-195. [Reserved].

Article 12

Prescription Medication Integrity

26-4-200. [For effective date, see note.] Short title.

26-4-201. [For effective date, see note.] Definitions.

26-4-202. [For effective date, see note.] Pedigrees for prescription drugs.

26-4-203. [For effective date, see note.] Immediate cease and desist orders for violations.

26-4-204. [For effective date, see note.] Prohibited acts.

26-4-205. [For effective date, see note.] Penalty.

Article 13

Safe Medications Practice

26-4-210. Short title.

26-4-211. Legislative findings and intent.

26-4-212. Definitions.

26-4-213. Collaboration.

Sec.

26-4-214. Role of State Board of Pharmacy and Georgia Composite

Sec.

Medical Board in establishing rules and regulations.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1, effective July 1, 1998, repealed the Code sections formerly codified at this chapter and enacted the current chapter. The former chapter consisted of Code Sections 26-4-1 through 26-4-12 (Article 1), 26-4-30 through 26-4-41 (Article 2, Part 1), 26-4-50 through 26-4-55 (Article 2, Part 2), 26-4-70 through 26-4-87 (Article 2, Part 3), 26-4-100 through 26-4-123 (Article 2, Part 4), 26-4-130 through 26-4-138 (Article 2, Part 4A), 26-4-140 through 26-4-148 (Article 2, Part 5), 26-4-160 through 26-4-163 (Article 2, Part 6), and was based on Code 1933, § 79A-101 et seq., enacted by Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, § 1 and Ga. L. 1860, p. 54, § 1, Ga. L. 1876, p. 24 §§ 1-3, Ga. L. 1882, § 4557(a) et seq., Penal Code 1895, § 470 et seq., Penal Code 1910, § 454 et seq., Ga. L. 1927, p. 291, § 14, Ga. L. 1931, p. 7, § 89, Ga. L. 1933, § 42-701 et seq., Ga. L. 1933, § 84-1314, Ga. L. 1939, p. 228, § 1-3, Ga. L. 1945, p. 421, § 1, Ga. L. 1947, p. 734, §§ 1-2, Ga. L. 1947, p. 1463, §§ 1, 4, Ga. L. 1947, p. 1471, §§ 5, 7, Ga. L. 1953, p. 395, § 1, Ga. L. 1956, p. 345, § 1, Ga. L. 1956, p. 724, § 2, Ga. L. 1957, p. 92, § 1, Ga. L. 1961, p. 529, §§ 19-20, 25, Ga. L. 1962, p. 105, §§ 17, 18, 20, 21, Ga. L. 1964, p. 276, § 1, Ga. L. 1966, p. 254, § 1, Ga. L. 1969, p. 936, § 1, Ga. L. 1970, p. 215, § 1, Ga. L. 1970, p. 465, § 1, Ga. L. 1972, p. 1015, §§ 19, 21, Ga. L.

1974, p. 221, § 2, Ga. L. 1974, p. 535, § 1-2, Ga. L. 1975, p. 97, § 1, Ga. L. 1976, p. 675, § 1, Ga. L. 1977, p. 625, §§ 1-6, Ga. L. 1977, p. 1093, § 1, Ga. L. 1978, p. 1668, §§ 1, 4, Ga. L. 1978, p. 1962, §§ 1-3, Ga. L. 1978, p. 1668, § 1-4, Ga. L. 1978, p. 1962, §§ 1, 3, Ga. L. 1979, p. 859, § 1-2, Ga. L. 1980, p. 1746, §§ 1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, Ga. L. 1980, p. 1761, § 1, Ga. L. 1981, p. 557, §§ 1, 6, Ga. L. 1981, p. 782, § 1-2, Ga. L. 1982, p. 3, § 26, Ga. L. 1982, p. 1156, §§ 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, Ga. L. 1982, p. 1264, §§ 1, 4, Ga. L. 1982, p. 2403, §§ 1, 2, 22, 23, Ga. L. 1983, p. 3, § 19, Ga. L. 1983, p. 790, §§ 1, 2, Ga. L. 1983, p. 1441, § 1, Ga. L. 1984, p. 22, § 26, Ga. L. 1985, p. 149, § 26, Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 26, Ga. L. 1986, p. 929, § 1, Ga. L. 1986, p. 1031, §§ 2-4, Ga. L. 1986, p. 1603, §§ 1-3, Ga. L. 1987, p. 1131, §§ 1-3, Ga. L. 1989, p. 261, § 1, Ga. L. 1989, p. 509, § 1, Ga. L. 1992, p. 6, § 26, Ga. L. 1992, p. 1307, § 1, Ga. L. 1992, p. 3137, § 43, Ga. L. 1996, p. 1425, § 1, Ga. L. 1996, p. 1609, §§ 2-9.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Rule 480-1-.01 et seq.

Law reviews.

For comment, "Process Is Due: The World Health Organization Prequalification of Medicines," see 68 Emory L.J. 645 (2019).

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. Proof of Facts.**

Injuries from Drugs, 7 POF3d 1.

Am. Jur. Trials.

Drug Products Liability and Malpractice Cases, 17 Am. Jur. Trials 1.

Pharmacist Liability, 32 Am. Jur. Trials 375.

Pharmacist Malpractice: Trial and Litigation Strategy, 78 Am. Jur. Trials 407.

ALR.

State and local administrative inspection of and administrative warrants to search pharmacies, 29 A.L.R.4th 264.

Criminal liability of pharmacy or pharmacist for welfare fraud in connection with supplying prescription drugs, 16 A.L.R.5th 390.

ARTICLE 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

26-4-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Pharmacy Practice Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-1, enacted by Ga. L.
1998, p. 686, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled
Substances, §§ 81, 82.

sale of poisons, drugs, or medicines, 54
A.L.R. 730.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, § 14 et
seq.

Constitutionality of statute regulating
sale or dispensation of medicines or drugs
in original package, 54 A.L.R. 744.

ALR.

Constitutionality of statute regulating

26-4-2. Liberal construction of chapter.

The practice of pharmacy in this state is declared to be a learned profession and the practice of pharmacy affects the public health, safety, and welfare and is subject to regulation and control in the public interest. It is further declared to be a matter of public interest and concern that the practice of pharmacy in this state as a learned profession, as defined in this chapter, should merit and receive the confidence of the public and that only qualified persons be permitted to engage in the practice of pharmacy to ensure the quality of drugs and related devices distributed in this state. This chapter shall be liberally construed to carry out these objectives and purposes.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-2, enacted by Ga. L.
1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-3. Legislative intent.

It is the purpose of this chapter to promote, preserve, and protect the public health, safety, and welfare by and through the effective control and regulation of the practice of pharmacy; the licensure of pharmacists; the licensure, control, and regulation of all sites or persons, in or out of this state that distribute, manufacture, or sell drugs or devices used in the dispensing and administration of drugs within this state; and the regulation and control of such other materials as may be used

in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of injury, illness, and disease of a patient or other individual.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-3, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-4. Definition of “practice of pharmacy.”

The “practice of pharmacy” means the interpretation, evaluation, or dispensing of prescription drug orders in the patient’s best interest; participation in drug and device selection, drug administration, drug regimen reviews, and drug or drug related research; provision of patient counseling and the provision of those acts or services necessary to provide pharmacy care; performing capillary blood tests and interpreting the results as a means to screen for or monitor disease risk factors and facilitate patient education, and a pharmacist performing such functions shall report the results obtained from such blood tests to the patient’s physician of choice; and the responsibility for compounding and labeling of drugs and devices.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-4, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 1.

26-4-5. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) “Administer” or “administration” means the provision of a unit dose of medication to an individual patient as a result of the order of an authorized practitioner of the healing arts.

(1.05) “Authorized” means, in the case of a wholesale distributor, having a valid license pursuant to this chapter or 21 U.S.C. Section 360eee-1(a)(6) and complying with the licensure reporting requirements under 21 U.S.C. Section 360eee-3(b).

(1.1) “Biological product” means a biological product as defined in subsection (i) of section 351 of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 262.

(2) “Board of pharmacy” or “board” means the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy.

(3) “Brand name drug” means the proprietary, specialty, or trade name used by a drug manufacturer for a generic drug and placed upon the drug, its container, label, or wrapping at the time of packaging.

(3.1) “Cognizant member” means that member of the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy who is charged with conducting investiga-

tive interviews relating to investigations involving licensees, registrants, and permit holders.

(4) “Compounding” means the preparation, mixing, assembling, packaging, or labeling of a drug by a pharmacist or pharmacy licensed or registered by the board or by a practitioner in compliance with rules established by the board regarding pharmaceutical compounding:

(A) As the result of a practitioner’s prescription drug order or initiative for a specific patient based on the relationship between the practitioner, patient, and pharmacist in the course of professional practice;

(B) For use by a practitioner in the administration of a dangerous drug or controlled substance to a patient in his or her professional practice office or setting;

(C) For use within the hospital or health system in which the pharmacy is located or in which the practitioner or pharmacist practices or for use within clinics or other entities owned or operated by such hospital or health system; or

(D) For the purpose of, or as an incident to, research, teaching, or chemical analysis and not for sale or dispensing.

Compounding also includes the preparation of drugs in anticipation of prescription drug orders based on routine and regularly observed prescribing patterns.

(5) “Confidential information” means information maintained by the pharmacist in the patient’s records or which is communicated to the patient as part of patient counseling which is privileged and may be released only to the patient or, as the patient directs, to those practitioners and other pharmacists where, in the pharmacist’s professional judgment, such release is necessary to protect the patient’s health and well-being; and to such other persons or governmental agencies authorized by law to receive such confidential information.

(6) “Controlled substance” means a drug, substance, or immediate precursor in Schedules I through V of Code Sections 16-13-25 through 16-13-29, Schedules I through V of 21 C.F.R. Part 1308, or both.

(7) “Dangerous drug” means any drug, substance, medicine, or medication as defined in Code Section 16-13-71.

(8) “Deliver” or “delivery” means the actual, constructive, or attempted transfer of a drug or device from one person to another, whether or not for a consideration.

(9) “Device” means an instrument, apparatus, contrivance, or

other similar or related article, including any component part or accessory, which is required under federal law to bear the label, “Caution: federal or state law requires dispensing by or on the order of a physician.”

(10) “Dispense” or “dispensing” means the preparation and delivery of a drug or device to a patient, patient’s caregiver, or patient’s agent pursuant to a lawful order of a practitioner in a suitable container appropriately labeled for subsequent administration to, or use by, a patient.

(11) “Distribute” means the delivery of a drug or device other than by administering or dispensing.

(12) “Drug” means:

(A) Articles recognized as drugs in any official compendium, or supplement thereto, designated from time to time by the board for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in humans or animals;

(B) Articles intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease in humans or animals;

(C) Articles, other than food, intended to affect the structure or any function of the body of humans or animals; and

(D) Articles intended for use as a component of any articles specified in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of this paragraph but does not include devices.

(13) “Drug regimen review” includes but is not limited to the following activities:

(A) Evaluation of any prescription drug order and patient record for:

- (i) Known allergies;
- (ii) Rational therapy-contraindications;
- (iii) Reasonable dose and route of administration; and
- (iv) Reasonable directions for use;

(B) Evaluation of any prescription drug order and patient record for duplication of therapy;

(C) Evaluation of any prescription drug order and patient record for the following interactions:

- (i) Drug-drug;
- (ii) Drug-food;

- (iii) Drug-disease; and
- (iv) Adverse drug reactions; and

(D) Evaluation of any prescription drug order and patient record for proper utilization, including overutilization or underutilization, and optimum therapeutic outcomes.

(14) “Drug researcher” means a person, firm, corporation, agency, department, or other entity which handles, possesses, or utilizes controlled substances or dangerous drugs, as defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16, for purposes of conducting research, drug analysis, animal training, or drug education, as such purposes may be further defined by the board, and is not otherwise registered as a pharmacist, pharmacy, drug wholesaler, distributor, supplier, or medical practitioner.

(14.05) “Durable medical equipment” means equipment for which a prescription is required, including repair and replacement parts for such equipment, and which:

- (A) Can withstand repeated use;
- (B) Has an expected life of at least three years;
- (C) Is primarily and customarily used to serve a medical purpose;
- (D) Generally is not useful to a person in the absence of illness or injury; and
- (E) Is appropriate for use in the home.

(14.1) “Electronic data prescription drug order” means any digitalized prescription drug order transmitted to a pharmacy, by a means other than by facsimile, which contains the secure, personalized digital key, code, number, or other identifier used to identify and authenticate the prescribing practitioner in a manner required by state laws and board regulations and includes all other information required by state laws and board regulations. “Electronic data prescription drug order” also includes any digitalized prescription drug order transmitted to a pharmacy that is converted into a visual image of a prescription order during the transmission process, is received by the pharmacy through a facsimile, and includes the practitioner’s electronic signature.

(14.2) “Electronic data signature” means:

- (A) A secure, personalized digital key, code, number, or other identifier used for secure electronic data transmissions which identifies and authenticates the prescribing practitioner as a part

of an electronic data prescription drug order transmitted to a pharmacy; or

(B) An electronic symbol or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a prescribing practitioner with the intent to sign an electronic data prescription drug order, which identifies the prescribing practitioner, as a part of an electronic data prescription drug order transmitted to a pharmacy.

(14.3) “Electronic signature” means an electronic visual image signature or an electronic data signature of a practitioner which appears on an electronic prescription drug order.

(14.4) “Electronic visual image prescription drug order” means any exact visual image of a prescription drug order issued by a practitioner electronically and which bears an electronic reproduction of the visual image of the practitioner’s signature, is either printed on security paper and presented as a hard copy to the patient or transmitted by the practitioner via facsimile machine or equipment to a pharmacy, and contains all information required by state law and regulations of the board.

(14.5) “Electronic visual image signature” means any exact visual image of a practitioner’s signature reproduced electronically on a hard copy prescription drug order presented to the patient by the practitioner or is a prescription drug order transmitted to a pharmacy by a practitioner via facsimile machine or equipment.

(15) “Emergency service provider” means licensed ambulance services, first responder services or neonatal services, or any combination thereof.

(15.1) “Executive director” means the executive director appointed by the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy pursuant to Code Section 26-4-20.

(16) “Extern” or “pharmacy extern” means an individual who is a student currently enrolled in an approved school or college of pharmacy and who has been assigned by the school or college of pharmacy to a licensed pharmacy for the purposes of obtaining practical experience and completing a degree in pharmacy. For the purposes of this chapter, a pharmacy extern may engage in any activity or perform any function which a pharmacy intern may perform under the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist.

(17) “Federal act” or “United States Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act” means the United States Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of the United States of America, approved June 25, 1938, officially cited as Public Document 717, 75th Congress (Chapter 675-3rd Sess.) and all

amendments thereto, and all regulations promulgated thereunder by the commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration.

(18) “Generic name” means a chemical name, a common or public name, or an official name used in an official compendium recognized by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended.

(18.05) “Hard copy prescription drug order” means a written, typed, reproduced, or printed prescription drug order prepared on a piece of paper.

(18.1) “Institution” means any licensed hospital, nursing home, assisted living community, personal care home, hospice, health clinic, or prison clinic.

(18.2) “Interchangeable biological product” means a biological product that the federal Food and Drug Administration has determined meets the standards set forth in subsection (k)(4) of 42 U.S.C. Section 262 or has been deemed therapeutically equivalent by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

(19) “Intern” or “pharmacy intern” means an individual who is:

(A) A student who is currently enrolled in an approved school or college of pharmacy, has registered with the board, and has been licensed as a pharmacy intern;

(B) A graduate of an approved school or college of pharmacy who is currently licensed by the board for the purpose of obtaining practical experience as a requirement for licensure as a pharmacist; or

(C) An individual who does not otherwise meet the requirements of subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph and who has established educational equivalency by obtaining a Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee (FPGEC) certificate and is currently licensed by the board for the purpose of obtaining practical experience as a requirement for licensure as a pharmacist.

(20) Reserved.

(21) “Labeling” means the process of preparing and affixing a label to any drug container exclusive, however, of the labeling by a manufacturer, packer, or distributor of a nonprescription drug or commercially packaged legend drug or device. Any such label shall include all information required by federal, state, or federal and state law or rule.

(22) “Manufacturer” means a person engaged in the manufacturing of drugs or devices.

(23) “Manufacturing” means the production, preparation, propagation, conversion, or processing of a drug or device, either directly or indirectly, by extraction from substances of natural origin or independently by means of chemical or biological synthesis and includes any packaging or repackaging of any substance or labeling or relabeling of its container and the promotion and marketing of such drugs or devices. Manufacturing also includes the preparation and promotion of commercially available products from bulk compounds for resale by pharmacies, practitioners, or other persons.

(23.5) “Narcotic treatment program clinic pharmacy” means a pharmacy which is attached to, located in, or otherwise a part of and operated by a narcotic treatment program which provides an opiate replacement treatment program, as designated or defined by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities or such other state agency as may be designated as the state authority for the purposes of implementing the narcotic treatment program authorized by federal and state laws and regulations.

(24) “Nonprescription drug” means a drug which may be sold without a prescription and which is labeled for use by the consumer in accordance with the requirements of the laws and rules of this state and the federal government.

(24.1) “Outsourcing facility” means a facility that is engaged in the compounding of drugs and is registered with the federal Food and Drug Administration as an outsourcing facility pursuant to Section 503b of the federal act.

(25) “Patient counseling” means the oral communication by the pharmacist of information, as defined in the rules of the board, to the patient, patient’s caregiver, or patient’s agent, in order to improve therapy by ensuring proper use of drugs and devices.

(26) “Person” means an individual, corporation, partnership, or association.

(27) “Pharmaceutically equivalent” means drug products that contain identical amounts of the identical active ingredient, in identical dosage forms, but not necessarily containing the same inactive ingredients.

(28) “Pharmacist” means an individual currently licensed by this state to engage in the practice of pharmacy. This recognizes a pharmacist as a learned professional who is authorized to provide patient services and pharmacy care.

(29) “Pharmacist in charge” means a pharmacist currently licensed in this state who accepts responsibility for the operation of a pharmacy in conformance with all laws and rules pertinent to the

practice of pharmacy and the distribution of drugs and who is personally in full and actual charge of such pharmacy and personnel.

(30) "Pharmacy" means:

(A) The profession, art, and science that deals with pharmacy care, drugs, or both, medicines, and medications, their nature, preparation, administration, dispensing, or effect; or

(B) Any place licensed in accordance with this chapter wherein the possessing, displaying, compounding, dispensing, or selling of drugs may be conducted, including any and all portions of the building or structure leased, used, or controlled by the licensee in the conduct of the business or profession licensed by the board at the address for which the license was issued.

(31) "Pharmacy care" means:

(A) Those services related to the interpretation, evaluation, or dispensing of prescription drug orders, the participation in drug and device selection, drug administration, and drug regimen reviews, and the provision of patient counseling related thereto; and

(B) Ordering and administering:

(i) Tests that have been cleared or approved for home use by the federal Food and Drug Administration and interpreting the results as a means to screen for or monitor disease, disease risk factors, or drug use and to facilitate patient education; and

(ii) Viral and serology COVID-19 tests, provided that such authority shall expire 12 months after the end of the public health emergency declared by the United States secretary of health and human services on January 31, 2020; provided, however, that such expiration shall not apply to viral and serology COVID-19 tests cleared or approved pursuant to division (i) of this subparagraph.

A pharmacist conducting such a test shall do so at a pharmacy or other facility that has obtained any necessary certification from or that is operating under a certificate of waiver from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services pursuant to the federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1998.

(32) "Pharmacy technician" means those support persons utilized in pharmacies whose responsibilities are to provide nonjudgmental technical services concerned with the preparation for dispensing of drugs under the direct supervision and responsibility of a pharmacist.

(33) “Practitioner” or “practitioner of the healing arts” means a physician, dentist, podiatrist, optometrist, or veterinarian and shall include any other person licensed under the laws of this state to use, mix, prepare, dispense, prescribe, and administer drugs in connection with medical treatment to the extent provided by the laws of this state.

(34) “Preceptor” means an individual who is currently licensed as a pharmacist by the board, meets the qualifications as a preceptor under the rules of the board, and participates in the instructional training of pharmacy interns.

(35) “Prescription drug” or “legend drug” means a drug which, under federal law, is required, prior to being dispensed or delivered, to be labeled with either of the following statements: “Caution: federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription” or “Caution: federal law restricts this drug to use by, or on the order of, a licensed veterinarian”; or a drug which is required by any applicable federal or state law or rule to be dispensed pursuant only to a prescription drug order or is restricted to use by practitioners only; or a controlled substance, as defined in paragraph (6) of this Code section or a dangerous drug as defined in paragraph (7) of this Code section.

(36) “Prescription drug order” means a lawful order of a practitioner for a drug or device for a specific patient; such order includes an electronic visual image prescription drug order and an electronic data prescription drug order.

(37) “Prospective drug use review” means a review of the patient’s drug therapy and prescription drug order, as defined in the rules of the board, prior to dispensing the drug as part of a drug regimen review.

(37.1) “Remote automated medication system” means an automated mechanical system that is located in a skilled nursing facility or hospice licensed as such pursuant to Chapter 7 of Title 31 that does not have an on-site pharmacy and in which medication may be dispensed in a manner that may be specific to a patient.

(37.2) “Remote order entry” means the entry made by a pharmacist licensed in this state, who is an employee or contractor of a pharmacy licensed in this state or that holds a nonresident pharmacy permit issued pursuant to Code Section 26-4-114.1, from a remote location anywhere in the United States indicating that the pharmacist has reviewed the patient specific drug order for a hospital patient, has approved or disapproved the administration of the drug for such patient, and has entered the information in the hospital’s patient record system.

(38) “Reverse drug distributor” means a person, firm, or corpora-

tion which receives and handles drugs from within this state which are expired, discontinued, adulterated, or misbranded, under the provisions of Chapter 3 of this title, the “Georgia Drug and Cosmetic Act,” from a pharmacy, drug distributor, or manufacturer for the purposes of destruction or other final disposition or for return to the original manufacturer of a drug.

(38.5) “Security paper” means:

(A) A prescription pad or paper that has been approved by the board for use and contains the following characteristics:

(i) One or more industry recognized features designed to prevent unauthorized copying of a completed or blank prescription form;

(ii) One or more industry recognized features designed to prevent the erasure or modification of information written on the prescription form by the practitioner; and

(iii) One or more industry recognized features designed to prevent the use of counterfeit prescription forms; or

(B) A prescription pad or paper that is an approved prescription pad or paper of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on January 1, 2013.

(39) “Significant adverse drug reaction” means a drug related incident that may result in serious harm, injury, or death to the patient.

(40) “Substitution” means to dispense pharmaceutically equivalent and therapeutically equivalent drug products as regulated by the board in place of the drug prescribed.

(40.1) “Third-party logistics provider” means an entity that provides or coordinates warehousing, distribution, or other services on behalf of a manufacturer, wholesale distributor, or chain pharmacy but does not take title to a drug or have general responsibility to direct the sale or other disposition of the drug.

(40.5) “USP-NF” means the United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary.

(41) “Wholesale distributor” means any person engaged in wholesale distribution of drugs, including but not limited to manufacturers; repackagers; own label distributors; private label distributors; jobbers; brokers; warehouses, including manufacturers’ and distributors’ warehouses, chain drug warehouses, and wholesale drug warehouses; independent wholesale drug traders; and retail and hospital pharmacies that conduct wholesale distributions.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-5, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 1.1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 22; Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, §§ 2, 3; Ga. L. 2007, p. 47, § 26/SB 103; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 3-2/HB 228; Ga. L. 2010, p. 266, § 1/SB 195; Ga. L. 2011, p. 227, § 7/SB 178; Ga. L. 2011, p. 308, § 5/HB 457; Ga. L. 2011, p. 659, § 3/SB 36; Ga. L. 2012, p. 1092, § 1A/SB 346; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 1/HB 209; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-1/HB 132; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90; Ga. L. 2015, p. 585, § 1/SB 194; Ga. L. 2015, p. 1209, § 1/SB 51; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 1/HB 926; Ga. L. 2017, p. 614, § 1/SB 41; Ga. L. 2018, p. 132, § 1/HB 769; Ga. L. 2019, p. 1056, § 26/SB 52; Ga. L. 2021, p. 472, § 4/HB 93; Ga. L. 2021, p. 525, § 1/HB 653; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(15)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2021 amendments.

The first 2021 amendment, effective July 1, 2021, rewrote paragraph (31). The second 2021 amendment, effective July 1, 2021, substituted the present provisions of paragraph (31) for the former provisions, which read: “Pharmacy care’ means those services related to the interpretation, evaluation, or dispensing of prescription drug orders, the participation in drug and device selection, drug administration, and drug regimen reviews, and the provision of patient counseling related thereto.”

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted “United States Food” for “Federal Food” in three places in paragraph (17).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

1998, “chapter” was substituted for “Chapter” in the first sentence of subparagraph (30)(B).

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2000, and due to the redesignation of paragraph (20) as paragraph (11.1), paragraph (20) has been set out as reserved.

Ga. L. 2021, p. 472, § 4/HB 93 and Ga. L. 2021, p. 525, § 1/HB 653 both amended paragraph (31) of this Code section. The language has been harmonized by setting out subparagraphs (31)(A) and (31)(B) as amended by Ga. L. 2021, p. 525, § 1/HB 653 and setting out the undesignated paragraph as amended by Ga. L. 2021, p. 472, § 4/HB 93.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, § 1, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Patient Safe Prescription Drug Act.’”

For application of this statute in 2021, see Executive Orders 01.15.21.01, 01.29.21.02, 02.15.21.01, 02.26.21.02, 03.12.21.01, 03.31.21.03, 04.30.21.01, 05.28.21.02, 06.30.21.02, 07.22.21.02, 08.19.21.02, and 09.20.21.02.

U.S. Code.

The Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments, referred to in this Code section, was enacted by P. L. 100-578, 102 Stat. 2903. For a full classification of the codification, consult the USCS tables volume.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 269 (2011).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s note. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Ga. L. 1972, pp. 948 and 949, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Label. — Inscription “714” signifies something associated with methaqualone and this inscription on the caps of bottles containing an unidentified substance is a label falsely identifying the contents as

methaqualone. Luck v. State, 163 Ga. App. 657, 295 S.E.2d 584, 1982 Ga. App. LEXIS 2612 (1982) (decided under former Ga. L. 1972, pp. 948 and 949).

Ga. L. 1972, pp. 948, 949 was not unconstitutionally vague or in violation of Ga. Const. 1945, Art. I, Sec. I, Para. III (see now Ga. Const. 1983, Art. I, Sec. I, Para. I). State v. Bonini, 236 Ga. 896, 225 S.E.2d 907, 1976 Ga. LEXIS 1059

(1976) (decided under former Ga. Const. 1945, Art. I, Sec. I, Para. III and Ga. L. 1972, pp. 948 and 949).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under former Code 1933, § 79A-102 and former O.C.G.A. § 26-4-2 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Licensing requirements for state and local agencies. — While state and local agencies are subject to the requirements of the Georgia Controlled Substances Act (O.C.G.A. § 16-13-20 et seq.) because of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-21(20), they are not subject to the requirements of the Dangerous Drug Act (O.C.G.A. § 16-13-70 et seq.), and if the State Board of Pharmacy desires the requirements of the Dangerous Drug Act to be imposed upon state agencies and their practitioners, legislation should be offered changing the definition of "person" in O.C.G.A. Title 26, Chapter 4 to coincide with the definition now found in the Controlled Substances

Act, and to also make that definition applicable to the Dangerous Drug Act. 1986 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 86-28 (decided under former O.C.G.A. § 26-4-2).

Nurse can telephone in prescription ordered by registered practitioner. — If the registered practitioner has actually ordered the controlled substance with the nurse merely relaying the prescription by telephone, former Code 1933, §§ 79A-820 and 79A-102 (see now O.C.G.A. §§ 16-13-41 and 26-4-5) did not specifically proscribe this activity. 1979 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 79-32 (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-102).

Nurses may not write or telephone in prescriptions by referring to a written protocol. 1988 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 88-9 (decided under former O.C.G.A. § 26-4-2).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 1, 15 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 1, 4, 5.

ALR.

What is "device" within meaning of § 201(h) of Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USCS § 321(h)), 129 A.L.R. Fed. 343.

26-4-6. Provisions of chapter not applicable to facilities engaged solely in distribution of dialysate drugs or certain dialysis equipment under certain conditions.

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to a facility engaged solely in the distribution of dialysate drugs, or devices necessary to perform home kidney dialysis to patients with end stage renal disease, provided that the following criteria are met:

- (1) The dialysate drugs, or devices are approved or cleared by the federal Food and Drug Administration as required by federal law;
- (2) The dialysate drugs, or devices are lawfully held by a manufacturer or manufacturer's agent that is properly registered with the board as a manufacturer or wholesale distributor;
- (3) The dialysate drugs, or devices are held and delivered in their original, sealed packaging from the manufacturing facility;

(4) The dialysate drugs, or devices are delivered only by the manufacturer or the manufacturer's agent and only upon receipt of a physician's order; and

(5) The manufacturer or manufacturer's agent delivers the dialysate drugs, or devices directly to:

(A) A patient with end stage renal disease or such patient's designee for the patient's self-administration of the dialysis therapy; or

(B) A health care provider or institution for administration or delivery of the dialysis therapy to a patient with end stage renal disease.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-6, enacted by Ga. L. 2015, p. 585, § 2/SB 194.

ARTICLE 2

STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY

26-4-20. Georgia State Board of Pharmacy; powers and duties.

(a) The Georgia State Board of Pharmacy existing immediately preceding July 1, 2013, is continued in existence, and members serving on the board immediately preceding that date shall continue to serve out their terms of office and until their respective successors are appointed and qualified.

(b) The responsibility for enforcement of the provisions of this chapter shall be vested in the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy. The board shall have all of the duties, powers, and authority specifically granted by or necessary for the enforcement of this chapter, as well as such other duties, powers, and authority as it may be granted from time to time by applicable law.

(c) On and after July 1, 2013, the board shall not be under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State but shall be a division of the Department of Community Health; provided, however, that except as otherwise specifically provided, the board shall be autonomous from the Board of Community Health and the commissioner of community health and shall exercise its quasi-judicial, rule-making, licensing, or policy-making functions independently of the department and without approval or control of the department and prepare its budget and submit its budgetary requests, if any, through the department. Such transfer shall in no way affect any existing obligations, liabilities, or rights of the board, as such existed on June 30, 2013. The board shall have with respect to all matters within the jurisdiction of the board as

provided under this chapter the powers, duties, and functions of professional licensing boards as provided in Chapter 1 of Title 43.

(d) The board shall appoint and fix the compensation, which shall be approved by the Board of Community Health, of an executive director of such board who shall serve at the pleasure of the board.

(e) The venue of any action involving members of the board shall be the county in which is found the primary office of the board. The executive director of the board shall not be considered a member of the board in determining the venue of any such action, and no court shall have jurisdiction over any such action solely by virtue of the executive director residing or maintaining a residence within its jurisdiction.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-20, enacted by Ga. L.

1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-2/HB 132.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-301 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Board and board members immune from damage actions. — Because of the control the state exercises over the State Board of Pharmacy, and because the board

appears to be an entity of the state as defined by Georgia law, the board, and the board members in their official capacities, is immune from the damage action by virtue of its Eleventh Amendment immunity. *Shepard v. Byrd*, 581 F. Supp. 1374, 1984 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19563 (N.D. Ga. 1984) (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-301).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under former Code 1933, Ch. 79A-3 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

State Board of Pharmacy and State Drug Inspector control dangerous

drugs. — Control of rabies generally is delegated to county boards of health, and the control of dangerous drugs is vested with the State Board of Pharmacy and the State Drug Inspector. 1975 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 75-23 (decided under former Code 1933, Ch. 79A-3).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 81, 82.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 69, 70.

26-4-21. Eligibility requirements for board members; oath of office.

(a) Each of the seven pharmacist members of the board shall, at the time of appointment:

- (1) Be a resident of this state for not less than six months;

(2) Be currently licensed and in good standing to engage in the practice of pharmacy in this state;

(3) Be actively engaged in the practice of pharmacy in this state;

(4) Have five years of experience in the practice of pharmacy in this state after licensure; and

(5) Not be officially employed as a full-time faculty member by any school or college of pharmacy.

(b) The one consumer member of the board shall be a resident of Georgia who has attained the age of majority and shall not have any connection whatsoever with the pharmaceutical industry.

(c) Appointees to the board shall immediately after their appointment take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation before a qualified officer that they will faithfully and impartially perform the duties of the office, and the oath shall be filed with the office of the Governor, whereupon the office of the Governor shall issue to each appointee a certificate of appointment.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-21, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-3/HB 132; Ga. L. 2015, p. 5, § 26/HB 90.

26-4-22. Number and terms of members; appointment; vacancies.

(a) The board shall consist of seven members possessing the qualification specified in subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-21 and one additional member possessing the qualifications specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 26-4-21 who shall be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for a term of five years or until their successors are appointed and qualified. Pharmacist members shall represent a diversity of practice settings and geographic dispersion of practitioners across this state.

(b) At the annual meeting of the Georgia Pharmacy Association, there may be nominated by such licensed pharmacists as may be present three practicing registered pharmacists who shall meet the qualifications imposed by subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-21 to fill the next vacancy occurring on the board, except a vacancy in the consumer member position on said board, by reason of expiration of term. The secretary of said association may regularly submit to the Governor the names of the three pharmacists so nominated and the Governor may make the appointment to fill such vacancy from the names so submitted. Should any vacancy occur upon the board, other than in the consumer member position on the board and other than by reason of expiration of term, such vacancy may be filled by appointment

by the Governor for the unexpired term from a group of three practicing registered pharmacists nominated as provided in this subsection at any regular or special meeting of the Georgia Pharmacy Association.

(c) The consumer member of the board shall also be appointed by the Governor. Such member shall vote only on matters relating to administration and policy which do not directly relate to practical and scientific examination of pharmacists for licensing in Georgia. Vacancies occurring in the membership of the board occupied by a consumer shall be filled by the Governor for the unexpired term of office.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192,
Code 1981, § 26-4-22, enacted by Ga. L. § 1-4/HB 132.

26-4-23. Removal of board members.

Any member who has failed to attend three consecutive regular monthly meetings of the board for any reason other than illness of such member shall be subject to removal by the Governor upon request of the board. The president of the board shall notify the Governor in writing when any such member has failed to attend three consecutive regular monthly meetings. Any member of the board may be removed by the Governor in the same manner as provided in Code Section 43-1-17.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192,
Code 1981, § 26-4-23, enacted by Ga. L. § 1-5/HB 132.

26-4-24. Meetings and organization; appeals; serving of notices and legal process.

The board shall meet at least annually to organize and elect a president and a vice president from its members. The vice president shall serve as the cognizant member of the board. All appeals from the decision of the board, all documents or applications required by law to be filed with the board, and any notice or legal process to be served upon the board may be filed with or served upon the executive director at his or her office in the county of domicile of the board.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706,
Code 1981, § 26-4-24, enacted by Ga. L. § 23; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-6/HB 132.

26-4-25. Expense and mileage allowances; reimbursement of certain costs and fees.

Each member of the board may receive the expense allowance as provided by subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 and the same mileage allowance for the use of a personal car as that received by other state officials and employees or a travel allowance of actual transportation costs if traveling by public carrier within this state. Each board member shall also be reimbursed for any conference or meeting

registration fee incurred in the performance of his or her duties as a board member. For each day's service outside of this state as a board member, such member shall receive actual expenses as an expense allowance as well as the mileage allowance for the use of a personal car equal to that received by other state officials and employees or a travel allowance of actual transportation costs if traveling by public carrier or by rental motor vehicle. Expense vouchers submitted by board members shall be subject to approval of the president and executive director. Out-of-state travel by board members shall be approved by the board president and the executive director.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192,
Code 1981, § 26-4-25, enacted by Ga. L. § 1-7/HB 132.

26-4-26. Meetings; notice; quorum; open meetings.

(a) To transact its business, the board shall hold regular meetings at least once each month unless, in the discretion of the president, it is deemed unnecessary for a particular month. The board shall meet at such additional times as it may determine. Such additional meetings may be called by the president of the board or by at least two-thirds of the members of the board.

(b) Notice of all meetings of the board shall be given in the manner and pursuant to requirements prescribed by Chapter 14 of Title 50 relating to open meetings.

(c) A majority of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of a board meeting and, except where a greater number is required by this chapter or by any rule of the board, all actions of the board shall be by a majority of a quorum.

(d) Meetings and hearings of the board shall be held at the site of the office of the board or at such other site as may be specified by the president of the board.

(e) All board meetings and hearings shall be open to the public. The board may, in its discretion and according to law, conduct any portion of its meeting in executive session closed to the public.

(f) Proceedings before the board wherein a licensee's or permit holder's right to practice pursuant to this chapter in this state is terminated, suspended, or limited or wherein a public reprimand is administered shall require prior notice to the licensee and an opportunity for hearing; and such proceedings shall be considered contested cases within the meaning of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." Neither refusal of a license or permit nor a private reprimand nor a letter of concern shall be considered a contested case within the meaning of Chapter 13 of Title 50; provided,

however, that the applicant shall be allowed to appear before the board, if the applicant so requests, prior to the board making a final decision regarding the issuance of the license or permit. The power to subpoena as set forth in Chapter 13 of Title 50 shall include the power to subpoena any relevant book, writing, paper, or document. If any licensee or permit holder fails to appear at any hearing after reasonable notice, the board may proceed to hear the evidence against such licensee or permit holder and take action as if such licensee or permit holder had been present.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192,
Code 1981, § 26-4-26, enacted by Ga. L. § 1-8/HB 132.

26-4-27. Authority to establish rules and regulations.

The board may establish such rules and regulations not inconsistent with this chapter and as in its judgment will best carry out the requirements thereof.

History.
Code 1981, § 26-4-27, enacted by Ga. L.
1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-28. Powers, duties, and authority.

(a) The board shall have the power, duty, and authority for the control and regulation of the practice of pharmacy in the State of Georgia, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) The licensing by examination or by license transfer of applicants who are qualified to engage in the practice of pharmacy under the provisions of this chapter;
- (2) The renewal of licenses to engage in the practice of pharmacy;
- (3) The establishment and enforcement of compliance with professional standards and rules of conduct of pharmacists engaged in the practice of pharmacy;
- (4) The determination and issuance of standards for recognition and approval of degree programs of schools and colleges of pharmacy whose graduates shall be eligible for licensure in this state, and the specification and enforcement of requirements for practical training including internship;
- (5) The enforcement of those provisions of this chapter relating to the conduct or competence of pharmacists practicing in this state and the suspension, revocation, or restriction of licenses to engage in the practice of pharmacy;
- (6) The licensure and regulation of pharmacies and pharmacy interns;

(7)(A) The regulation of other employees in the prescription or pharmacy department, including but not limited to the registration and regulation of pharmacy technicians. The board shall be required to establish the minimum qualifications for the registration of pharmacy technicians and shall be authorized to require the completion of a background check and criminal history record check for each person applying for registration as a pharmacy technician in this state. The certificate of registration, once issued, may be valid for no more than two years and shall be renewable biennially upon payment of a renewal fee and compliance with such other conditions as the board may establish by rule or regulation. The board shall be authorized to deny registration, to deny renewal, or to revoke or suspend the registration of a pharmacy technician for any of the grounds set forth in Code Section 26-4-60 or Code Section 43-1-19. However, said denial of a technician application, denial of the renewal of a certificate, or suspension or revocation of a technician registration shall not be considered a contested case under Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act," but said applicant or registrant shall be entitled to an appearance before the board. The board shall be required to establish and maintain a registry of pharmacy technicians in this state which contains the name and home address of each pharmacy technician and his or her employer and location of employment. The board shall establish a process by which the pharmacist in charge of each pharmacy shall provide updated information on the pharmacy technicians in the pharmacy. The board may establish and collect fees from pharmacy technicians, their employers, or both for the registration of pharmacy technicians and maintenance of the registry.

(B)(i) In enforcing this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, require a registrant or applicant to submit to a mental or physical examination by licensed health care providers designated by the board. The results of such examination shall be admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section 24-9-21. Every person who shall accept the privilege of practicing as a pharmacy technician in this state or who shall file an application for a certificate of registration to practice pharmacy in this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to submit to such mental or physical examination and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of the results in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the same constitutes a privileged communication. If a registrant or applicant fails to submit to such an examination when properly directed to do so by the

board, unless such failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the board may enter a final order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal. Any registrant or applicant who is prohibited from practicing as a pharmacy technician under this paragraph shall at reasonable intervals be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate to the board that he or she can resume or begin practicing as a pharmacy technician with reasonable skill and safety to patients.

(ii) For the purposes of this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, obtain any and all records relating to the mental or physical condition of a registrant or applicant, including psychiatric records; and such records shall be admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section 24-9-21. Every person who shall accept the privilege of practicing as a pharmacy technician in this state or who shall file an application for a certificate of registration to practice as a pharmacy technician in this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to the board's obtaining any such records and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of such records in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the same constitutes a privileged communication.

(iii) If any registrant or applicant could, in the absence of this paragraph, invoke a privilege to prevent the disclosure of the results of the examination provided for in division (i) of this subparagraph or the records relating to the mental or physical condition of such registrant or applicant obtained pursuant to division (ii) of this subparagraph, all such information shall be received by the board in camera and shall not be disclosed to the public, nor shall any part of the record containing such information be used against any registrant or applicant in any other type of proceeding;

(8) The collection of professional demographic data;

(9) The right to seize any such drugs and devices found by the board to constitute an imminent danger to the public health and welfare;

(10) The establishment of minimum specifications for the physical facilities, technical equipment, environment, supplies, personnel, and procedures for the storage, compounding, and dispensing of such drugs or devices utilized within the practice of pharmacy;

(11) The establishment of minimum standards for the purity and quality of such drugs utilized within the practice of pharmacy;

(12) The establishment of minimum standards for the purity and quality of such devices and other materials utilized within the practice of pharmacy;

(12.1)(A) The licensure for the use of remote automated medication systems and the regulation and establishment of minimum standards for the use and operation of remote automated medication systems to ensure safe and efficient dispensing, including, but not limited to, appropriate security measures, requirements for skilled nursing facilities and hospices that utilize such systems, training requirements, accuracy and quality assurance measures, recordkeeping requirements, and such other appropriate requirements as determined by the board.

(B) The regulation and establishment of minimum standards for the use and operation of remote automated medication systems by the board as provided for in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall permit a pharmacy technician registered pursuant to this chapter to fill a remote automated medication system. If the remote automated medication system utilizes radio frequency identification or bar coding in the filling process, the pharmacy shall retain an electronic record of the filling activities of the pharmacy technician. If the remote automated medication system does not utilize radio frequency identification or bar coding in the filling process, a pharmacist shall supervise continuously the filling activities of the pharmacy technician through a two-way audiovisual system.

(C) The board may establish rules and regulations to implement the requirements of this paragraph;

(13) The issuance and renewal of licenses or permits of all persons engaged in the manufacture and distribution of drugs, including but not limited to all types of drug manufacturers, wholesale distributors, reverse drug distributors, outsourcing facilities, and third-party logistics providers. The board shall be authorized to establish all licensing and permit requirements of such entities by rule and regulation;

(14) The issuance and renewal of licenses of all persons engaged in the manufacture and distribution of devices utilized within the practice of pharmacy;

(14.1) The issuance, suspension, denial, and renewal of licenses for suppliers of durable medical equipment pursuant to Code Section 26-4-51;

(15) The inspection of any licensed person at all reasonable hours for the purpose of determining if any provisions of the laws governing

the legal distribution of drugs or devices or the practice of pharmacy are being violated. The board and its officers, agents, and designees shall cooperate with all agencies charged with the enforcement of the laws of the United States, of this state, and of all other states relating to drugs, devices, and the practice of pharmacy;

(16) The investigation of alleged violations of this chapter or any other law in this state pertaining to, or in connection with, persons or firms licensed by the board or otherwise authorized by the laws of this state to manufacture, sell, distribute, dispense, or possess drugs, medicines, poisons, cosmetics, or devices, as related to misbranded or counterfeit drugs, or any rules and regulations promulgated by the board under this chapter; the conducting of investigative interviews or full board hearings, with or without the necessity of utilizing the Office of State Administrative Hearings, in respect thereto when in its discretion it appears to be necessary; and the bringing of such violations to the notice of the Attorney General;

(17) The listing at any time upon either a list under Article 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 16, the “Dangerous Drug Act,” or upon a schedule under Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16, the “Georgia Controlled Substances Act,” of any drug found to be potentially dangerous to public safety if dispensed without prescription;

(18) The expunging of the pharmacy related practice record of any pharmacist whose record consists of a sole sanction resulting from alcohol impairment and whose pharmacy related practice record during a five-year time period dating from the time of the sanction has incurred no additional charges or infractions;

(19) Restricting the inspection or examination of records or access to any area licensed and under the control of any registrant, which has been issued a permit by the board, to members of the board, agents for the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Community Health, or other federal agencies or agencies of this state otherwise entitled to such inspections or examinations by law, subpoena, or court order. This paragraph specifically prohibits inspections or examinations of board registrants or any requirement which forces board registrants to allow inspection or examination, or both, of their records by representatives for any nongovernment affiliated, private organization for any purpose since the access of patient prescription records is restricted by this chapter and access by such private organizations is unnecessary in that this access only duplicates existing record-keeping and inspection requirements already addressed by the laws and regulations of the board and other government organizations. This restriction shall also prohibit a private, nongovernment affiliated organization from examining or copying

continuing education certificates maintained by individual registrants. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit the pharmacist in charge from voluntarily allowing appropriate agencies and organizations to inspect or examine the records and pharmacy area under the control of the pharmacist in charge provided such inspections or examinations are for the purposes of ensuring the quality of care provided to patients;

(20) The requiring of background checks, including, but not limited to, criminal history record checks, on any persons or firms applying for licensure or registration pursuant to this chapter;

(21) Serving as the sole governmental or other authority which shall have the authority to approve or recognize accreditation or certification programs for specialty pharmacy practice or to determine the acceptability of entities which may accredit pharmacies or certify pharmacists in a specialty of pharmacy practice, and the board may require such accreditation or certification as a prerequisite for specialty or advanced pharmacy practice. Such accreditation and certification standards for specialties shall be set forth in rules promulgated by the board with such rules to contain the required qualifications or limitations. Any accreditation or certification for specialty pharmacy practice approved or recognized by the board shall be deemed sufficient to meet any and all standards, licensure, or requirements, or any combination thereof, otherwise set forth by any private entity or other government agency to satisfy its stated goals and standards for such accreditation or certification. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit private entities, government agencies, professional organizations, or educational institutions from submitting accreditation or certification programs for the review and potential approval or recognition by the board. Accreditation and certification for specialty pharmacy practice under this paragraph shall be subject to the following conditions:

(A) Applications shall be submitted as set forth in rules promulgated or approved by the board for accreditation or certification;

(B) Only a pharmacist registered by this state and maintaining an active license in good standing is eligible for certification in a specialty pharmacy practice by the board;

(C) Only a pharmacy registered by this state and maintaining an active license in good standing is eligible for accreditation for specialty pharmacy practice by the board;

(D) Any board approved or recognized accreditation for a specialty pharmacy practice of a pharmacy is to be deemed sufficient and shall satisfy any standards or qualifications re-

quired for payment of services rendered as set forth by any insurance company, carrier, or similar third-party payor plan in any policy or contract issued, issued for delivery, delivered, or renewed on or after July 1, 1999;

(E) Any board approved or recognized specialty certification issued to a pharmacist is deemed sufficient and shall satisfy any standards or qualifications required for payment of services rendered as set forth by any insurance company, carrier, or similar third-party payor plan in any policy or contract issued, issued for delivery, delivered, or renewed on or after July 1, 1999; and

(F) The board may deny, revoke, limit, suspend, probate, or fail to renew the accreditation or specialty certification of a pharmacy, pharmacist, or both for cause as set forth in Code Section 26-4-60 or for a violation of Chapter 13 of Title 16 or if the board determines that a pharmacy, pharmacist, or both no longer meet the accreditation or certification requirements of the board. Before such action, the board shall serve upon the pharmacist in charge of a pharmacy or pharmacist an order to show cause why accreditation or certification should not be denied, revoked, limited, suspended, or probated or why the renewal should not be refused. The order to show cause shall contain a statement for the basis therefor and shall call upon the pharmacist in charge of a pharmacy, the pharmacist, or both to appear before the board at a time and place not more than 60 days after the date of the service of the order;

(22) To adopt a seal by which the board shall authenticate the acts of the board;

(23) To keep a docket of public proceedings, actions, and filings;

(24) To set its office hours;

(25) To require licensees and permit holders to report a change of business address or personal address within ten days of the change in either address;

(26) To adopt necessary rules concerning proceedings, hearings, review hearings, actions, filings, depositions, and motions related to uncontested cases;

(27)(A) To authorize the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency to conduct inspections and initiate investigations on its behalf for the purpose of discovering violations of this chapter, Chapter 3 of this title, and Chapter 13 of Title 16.

(B) When conducting investigations and inspections on behalf of the board, the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall have

the same access to and may examine any relevant writing, document, or other material relating to any licensee, registrant, permittee, or applicant as the board. The executive director may issue subpoenas to compel access to any writing, document, or other material upon a determination that reasonable grounds exist for the belief that a violation of this chapter, Chapter 3 of this title, Chapter 13 of Title 16, or any other law relating to the practice of pharmacy may have taken place. The results of all investigations and inspections initiated by the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency which relate to an individual licensed or permitted by the board shall be reported by the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency to the board, and the records of such investigations shall be kept for the board by the director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency, and the board shall retain the right to have access to such records at any time. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subparagraph, Code Section 16-13-60 shall control the access to or release of information.

(C) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit or limit the authority of the executive director or the director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency to conduct inspections and initiate investigations on its own initiative for the purpose of discovering violations of this chapter, Chapter 3 of this title, and Chapter 13 of Title 16 and disclose such information to any law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subparagraph, Code Section 16-13-60 shall control the access to or release of information.

(D) The executive director or the director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency may also disclose to any person or entity information concerning the existence of any investigation for unlicensed practice being conducted against any person who is neither licensed nor an applicant for licensure by the board;

(28) To administer oaths, subpoena witnesses and documentary evidence, including relevant medical records, and take testimony in all matters relating to its duties;

(29) To conduct hearings, reviews, and other proceedings according to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act";

(30) To have the cognizant member of the board conduct investigative interviews in conjunction with the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency and thereafter to report his or her findings, with recommendations, to the board. In order to obtain a nonprejudicial decision, such report and recommendations shall not disclose the identity of the subject of the investigation. The cognizant member shall not vote

on matters which he or she has presented to the board as the cognizant member;

(31) To issue cease and desist orders to stop the unlicensed practice of pharmacy or other professions licensed, certified, or permitted under this chapter and impose penalties for such violations;

(32) To refer cases for criminal prosecution or injunctive relief to appropriate prosecuting attorneys or other law enforcement authorities of this state, another state, or the United States;

(33) To release investigative or applicant files to another enforcement agency or lawful licensing authority in another state;

(34) To sue and be sued in a court of competent jurisdiction;

(35) To enter into contracts;

(36) To assess fines for violations of this chapter or board rules; and

(37) To set all reasonable fees by adoption of a schedule of fees approved by the board. The board shall set such fees sufficient to cover costs of operation.

(b) Proceedings by the board in the exercise of its authority to cancel, suspend, or revoke any license issued under the terms of this chapter shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act." In all such proceedings, the board shall have authority to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of any book, writing, or document upon the issuance of a subpoena therefor signed by the secretary of the board. In any hearing in which the fitness of a licensee or applicant to practice pharmacy or another business or profession licensed by the board under this chapter is in question, the board may exclude all persons from its deliberation of the appropriate action to be taken and may, when it deems it necessary, speak to a licensee or applicant and his or her legal counsel in private.

(c) The board shall have such other duties, powers, and authority as may be necessary to the enforcement of this chapter and to the enforcement of board rules made pursuant thereto which shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) The board may join such professional organizations and associations organized exclusively to promote the improvement of the standards of the practice of pharmacy for the protection of the health and welfare of the public and whose activities assist and facilitate the work of the board;

(2) The board may place under seal all drugs or devices that are

owned by or in the possession, custody, or control of a licensee at the time his or her license is suspended or revoked or at the time the board refuses to renew his or her license. Except as otherwise provided in this Code section, drugs or devices so sealed shall not be disposed of until appeal rights under Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,” have expired, or an appeal filed pursuant to such chapter has been determined. The court involved in an appeal filed pursuant to such chapter may order the board, during the pendency of the appeal, to sell sealed drugs that are perishable. The proceeds of such a sale shall be deposited with that court;

(3) Except as otherwise provided to the contrary, the board shall exercise all of its duties, powers, and authority in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act”;

(4) In addition to the fees specifically provided for in this chapter, the board may assess additional reasonable fees for services rendered to carry out its duties and responsibilities as required or authorized by this chapter or the rules and regulations promulgated by the board. Such services rendered shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (A) Issuance of duplicate certificates or identification cards;
 - (B) Certification of documents;
 - (C) License transfer;
 - (D) Examination administration to a licensure applicant; and
 - (E) Examination materials; and
- (5) Cost recovery.

(A) For any order issued in resolution of a disciplinary proceeding before the board, the board may direct any licensee found guilty of a charge involving a violation of any drug laws or rules to pay to the board a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and prosecution of the case and, in any case, not to exceed \$25,000.00. The costs to be assessed shall be fixed by the board and the costs so recovered shall be paid to the state treasury; and

(B) In the case of a pharmacy or wholesale distributor, the order issued may be made to the corporate owner, if any, and to any pharmacist, officer, owner, or partner of the pharmacy or wholesale distributor who is found to have had knowledge of or have participated knowingly in one or more of the violations set forth in this Code section.

Where an order for recovery of costs is made and timely payment is not made as directed in the board's decision, the board may enforce the order for payment in the court in the county where the administrative hearing was held. This right of enforcement shall be in addition to any other rights the board may have as to any person directed to pay costs. In any action for recovery of costs, proof of the board's decision shall be conclusive proof of the validity of the order of payment and the terms for payment.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-28, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, §§ 2, 3; Ga. L. 2007, p. 229, § 1/HB 330; Ga. L. 2011, p. 308, § 6/HB 457; Ga. L. 2011, p. 541, § 1/SB 81; Ga. L. 2012, p. 775, § 26/HB 942; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 26/HB 79; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-9/HB 132; Ga. L. 2015, p. 1360, § 1/HB 511; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 2/HB 926; Ga. L. 2017, p. 614, § 2/SB 41; Ga. L. 2017, p. 774, § 26/HB 323.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1998, "\$25,000.00" was substituted for "\$25,000" at the end of the first sentence in subparagraph (c)(5)(A).

Administrative rules and regulations.

General Information, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-38-.01 et seq.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-302 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Drug criminal investigations transferred from board to Department of Public Safety's Division of Investigation. — Under the Executive Reorganization Act of 1972, Ga. L. 1972, p. 1015,

§§ 19, 20, the functions of the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy relating to alleged violations pertaining to drugs were transferred to the Department of Public Safety, and the criminal investigative functions so transferred were assigned to the Division of Investigation. *Smith v. State*, 131 Ga. App. 722, 206 S.E.2d 711, 1974 Ga. App. LEXIS 1535 (1974) (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-302).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, and former Code Section 26-4-37 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Board's power to regulate dangerous drugs, but not rabies. — Control of rabies generally is delegated to county boards of health, and the control of dangerous drugs is vested with the State Board of Pharmacy and the State Drug Inspector. 1975 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 75-23 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Any law enforcement official who has obtained a search warrant may lawfully search for and seize pre-

scriptions retained for inspection by a pharmacy as required by Georgia law. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-112 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Chief Drug Inspector of the board can seize evidence under a warrant and make arrests. — Chief Drug Inspector of the State Board of Pharmacy and the Inspector's assistants have the authority to make arrests for violations of Ga. L. 1967, p. 296 (see now O.C.G.A. § 16-13-20 et seq.), and to search and seize evidence necessary for the presentation before courts of this state or before the State Board of Pharmacy; the Chief Drug Inspector and the Inspector's assistants

do not have the authority to seize prescriptions from a pharmacy without properly acquiring a search warrant. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-112 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Board's power to regulate dispensing of drugs in hospitals. — Dispensing of drugs in hospitals by machine or otherwise is a matter which the legislature has left to the State Board of Pharmacy to regulate through the Board's rule making power. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-85 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Board's powers when violator not within its jurisdiction. — When the alleged violator is without the jurisdiction of the State Board of Pharmacy, the recourse of the board lies in the notification of the federal authorities charged with the enforcement of federal laws in the area of nonmailable items and the regulation of drugs, medicines, and poisons. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-121 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, §§ 19 et seq., 81, 82, 89.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 14 et seq., 65 et seq., 79 et seq.

26-4-28.1. Power, duties, and authority of the executive director.

(a) The executive director:

(1) Shall be a full-time employee of the board and shall serve as the chief executive officer and secretary of the board. Any person, in order to qualify for appointment as the executive director, shall be of good moral character and shall possess such qualifications as the board may require. The executive director shall have, with respect to the board, the same powers, duties, and functions granted to the division director with respect to professional licensing boards under Chapter 1 of Title 43 but shall not be subject to any approval or other powers exercised by the Secretary of State;

(2) With the approval of the board, may employ or contract with and fix the compensation of administrative assistants, secretaries, and any other such staff as deemed necessary to assist in the duties of the board. The director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall serve as the assistant executive director, who shall act on behalf of the executive director in his or her absence. The executive director and other board staff shall be allowed reimbursement for travel and other expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties in the same manner as other state officers and employees, and shall receive payment of the same in the manner provided for the board;

(3) Shall take an oath to discharge faithfully the duties of the office; and

(4) Shall be charged with the duties and powers as prescribed by the board.

(b) The executive director shall prepare and maintain a public roster containing the names and business addresses of all current licensees, registration holders, and permit holders for each of the various registrants regulated by the board. A copy of the roster shall be available to any person upon request at a fee prescribed by the board sufficient to cover the cost of printing and distribution. The following shall be treated as confidential, not subject to Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50, relating to open records, and shall not be disclosed without the approval of the board:

(1) Applications and other personal information submitted by applicants, except to the applicant, the staff, and the board;

(2) Information, favorable or unfavorable, submitted by a reference source concerning an applicant, except to the staff and the board;

(3) Examination questions and other examination materials, except to the staff and the board; and

(4) The deliberations of the board with respect to an application, an examination, a complaint, an investigation, or a disciplinary proceeding, except as may be contained in official board minutes; provided, however, that such deliberations may be released to a law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney of this state or to another state or federal enforcement agency or lawful licensing authority. Releasing the documents pursuant to this paragraph shall not subject any otherwise privileged documents to the provisions of Code Section 50-18-70.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-28.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-10/HB 132.

26-4-28.2. Notification to board of convictions.

Any licensee, registration holder, or permit holder who is convicted under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, territory, or country of a felony shall be required to notify the board of the conviction within ten days of the conviction. The failure to notify the board of a conviction shall be considered grounds for revocation of his or her license, registration, permit, or other authorization to engage in the practice of pharmacy or another profession regulated under this chapter.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-28.2, enacted by Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-10/HB 132.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Required Reporting to the Board, Offi-

cial Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Durable Medical Equipment Suppliers, Rule 480-7B-.05.

26-4-29. Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency; powers and duties.

(a) The agency created in 1908 as the Office of the Chief Drug Inspector and known as the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency since 1976 is continued in existence as the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency. This agency shall be a budget unit as defined under Code Section 45-12-71; provided, however, that the agency shall be assigned for administrative purposes only, as defined in Code Section 50-4-3, to the Department of Community Health, except that such department shall prepare and submit the budget for the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency. The Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency is authorized by this Code section to enforce the drug laws of this state. The board shall appoint a director who shall be charged with supervision and control of such agency. The Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall employ the number of personnel deemed necessary to properly protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of this state. Such personnel shall be pharmacists registered in this state when employed as either special agents or the deputy director.

(b) The director shall hold office at the pleasure of the board, and should any vacancy occur in such office for any cause whatsoever, the board shall appoint a successor at a regular or called meeting. The director shall be a pharmacist registered in this state. The director shall serve as the assistant executive director for the board and act on behalf of the executive director during his or her absence. The salary of the director shall be fixed by the board. The whole time of the director shall be at the disposal of the board. The director, or Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency personnel acting on behalf of the director, shall have the duty and the power to:

(1) Visit and inspect factories, warehouses, wholesaling establishments, retailing establishments, chemical laboratories, and such other establishments in which any drugs, devices, cosmetics, and such articles known as family remedies, grocer's drugs, and toilet articles are manufactured, processed, packaged, sold at wholesale, sold at retail, or otherwise held for introduction into commerce;

(2) Enter and inspect any vehicle used to transport or hold any drugs, devices, cosmetics, or any of the articles listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection;

(3) Investigate alleged violations of laws and regulations regarding drugs, devices, cosmetics, or any of the articles listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection;

(4) Take up samples of the articles listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection from any of such establishments for examination and

analysis by the state chemist, or under such person's direction and supervision, as provided by Code Section 26-4-131;

(5) Seize and take possession of all articles which are declared to be contraband under Chapter 13 of Title 16 and Chapter 3 of this title and this chapter and deliver such articles to the agency;

(6) Compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence on behalf of the board via a subpoena issued by the director, when there is reason to believe any violations of laws or regulations concerning drugs, devices, cosmetics, or any of the articles listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection have occurred; and

(7) Perform such other duties as may be directed by the board.

(c)(1) The director, deputy director, and special agents of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall have the authority and power that sheriffs possess to make arrests of any persons violating or charged with violating Chapter 13 of Title 16 and Chapter 3 of this title and this chapter. The deputy director and special agents shall be required to be P.O.S.T. certified peace officers under Chapter 8 of Title 35, the "Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Act."

(2) In case of such arrest, the director, deputy director, or any of the special agents shall immediately deliver the person so arrested to the custody of the sheriff of the county wherein the offense is alleged to have been committed. The duty of the sheriff in regard to the person delivered to the sheriff by any such person arrested under power of this Code section shall be the same as if the sheriff had made the original arrest.

(d) When the deputy director or a special agent employed by the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency leaves the agency under honorable conditions after accumulating 25 years of service in the agency, as a result of a disability arising in the line of duty, or pursuant to approval by the State Board of Pharmacy, such director or agent shall be entitled to retain his or her weapon and badge pursuant to approval by the State Board of Pharmacy, and, upon leaving the agency, the director of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall retain his or her weapon and badge pursuant to approval by the State Board of Pharmacy.

(e) The Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency may employ personnel who are not special agents to conduct and assist with inspections.

(f) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, upon receiving a summary report from agency personnel, the director shall report to the board what have been determined to be violations of the drug laws and rules over which the board has authority. After such reports have been made to the board, the board may instruct the director to:

(1) Cite any such person or establishment to appear before the cognizant member of the board for an investigative interview;

(2) Forward such reports to the Attorney General's office for action decided on by the board; or

(3) Take whatever other action the board deems necessary.

(g) The Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency may contract with and submit invoices for payment of services rendered to other professional licensing boards for the purposes of conducting investigations on their behalf and under the authority of such other professional licensing boards. Such investigations and subsequent reports and summaries shall be subject to the same confidentiality restrictions and disclosure as required for investigations and reports for the requesting professional licensing board. Any such payment of services received by the agency shall be deposited into the general fund of the state treasury.

(h) The Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall compile and submit to the General Assembly during each annual legislative session a list of known dangerous drugs as defined in subsection (a) of Code Section 16-13-71 and any other drugs or devices which the board has determined may be dangerous or detrimental to the public health and safety and should require a prescription, and the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency shall assist the State Board of Pharmacy during each annual legislative session by compiling and submitting a list of substances to add to or reschedule substances enumerated in the schedules in Code Sections 16-13-25 through 16-13-29 by using the guidelines set forth in Code Section 16-13-22.

(i) The State Board of Pharmacy is authorized and directed to publish in print or electronically and distribute the "Dangerous Drug List" as prepared by the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency and the "Georgia Controlled Substances Act" as enacted by law.

(j) The Georgia State Board of Pharmacy shall provide for a fee as deemed reasonable, or at no cost, such number of copies of the "Dangerous Drug List" and "Georgia Controlled Substances Act" to law enforcement officials, school officials, parents, and other interested citizens as are required.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-29, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 26/HB 79; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-11/HB 132.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

2010, "45-12-71" was substituted for "45-12-7" in the second sentence of subsection (a).

Administrative rules and regulations.

Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency (GDNA) Classifications and Minimum Requirements for Special Agents and Deputy Director, Official Compilation of the Rules

and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-14-.01.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-208 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Agents immune from federal civil rights actions. — Neither a federal civil rights action for damages nor a pendent claim of malicious prosecution may proceed against agents of the Georgia Drug and Narcotics Agency in their official capacities by virtue of the Eleventh Amendment. *Shepard v. Byrd*, 581 F. Supp. 1374, 1984 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19563 (N.D. Ga. 1984) (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-208).

Department of Public Safety's Division of Investigation investigates drug violations. — Under the Executive

Reorganization Act of 1972, Ga. L. 1972, p. 1015, §§ 19, 20, the functions of the Georgia State Board of Pharmacy relating to alleged violations pertaining to drugs under former Code 1933, § 79A-208 (see now O.C.G.A. § 26-4-37 et seq.,) were transferred to the Department of Public Safety, and the criminal investigative functions were assigned to the Division of Investigation. *Smith v. State*, 131 Ga. App. 722, 206 S.E.2d 711, 1974 Ga. App. LEXIS 1535 (1974) (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-208).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296, and former Code Section 26-4-51 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Any law enforcement official who has obtained a search warrant may lawfully search for and seize prescriptions retained for inspection by a pharmacy as required by Georgia law. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-112 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Right of Chief Drug Inspector with warrant, to seize evidence. — Chief Drug Inspector of the State Board of Pharmacy and the Inspector's assistants have the authority to make arrests for violations of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-70 et seq. and Ga. L. 1967, p. 296 (see now O.C.G.A. § 16-13-20 et seq.), and to search and seize evidence necessary for the presentation

before courts of this state or before the State Board of Pharmacy; the Chief Drug Inspector and the Inspector's assistants do not have the authority to seize prescriptions from a pharmacy without properly acquiring a search warrant. 1970 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 70-112 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

Board's recourse to federal authorities when violator not within board's jurisdiction. — When the alleged violator is without the jurisdiction of the State Board of Pharmacy, the recourse of the board lies in the notification of the federal authorities charged with the enforcement of federal laws in the area of nonmailable items and the regulation of drugs, medicines, and poisons. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-121 (decided under Ga. L. 1967, p. 296).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 171, 213.

ALR.

Lawfulness of seizure of property used in violation of law as prerequisite to for-

feiture action or proceeding, 8 A.L.R.3d 473.

Federal prosecutions based on manufacture, importation, transportation, possession, sale, or use of LSD, 22 A.L.R.3d 1325.

Marijuana, psilocybin, peyote, or similar drugs of vegetable origin as narcotics for purposes of drug prosecution, 50 A.L.R.3d 1164.

LSD, STP, MDA, or other chemically synthesized hallucinogenic or psychedelic substances as narcotics for purposes of drug prosecution, 50 A.L.R.3d 1284.

Odor of narcotics as providing probable cause for warrantless search, 5 A.L.R.4th 681.

26-4-30. Construction of chapter.

This chapter shall not be construed to prohibit the sale by general merchants or other nonpharmacy retailers of nonprescription drugs when sold only in their original and unbroken packages.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-30, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 3

PRACTICE OF PHARMACY

Administrative rules and regulations.

Licensure as a Pharmacist, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-2-.01 et seq.

Pharmacy Technicians and Other Pharmacy Personnel, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-15-.01 et seq.

26-4-40. Unlawful to practice pharmacy without license; exception; penalty.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, it shall be unlawful for any individual to engage in the practice of pharmacy unless currently licensed to practice under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) Practitioners authorized under the laws of this state to compound drugs and to dispense drugs to their patients in the practice of their respective professions shall not be required to be licensed under the provisions of this chapter; however, practitioners shall meet the same standards, record-keeping requirements, and all other requirements for the dispensing of drugs applicable to pharmacists.

(c) Any individual who, after hearing, shall be found by the board to have unlawfully engaged in the practice of pharmacy shall be subject to a fine to be imposed by the board for each offense. Each violation of this chapter pertaining to unlawfully engaging in the practice of pharmacy shall also constitute a felony punishable upon conviction thereof by a fine of not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$1,000.00 or by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than five years, or both.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-40, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

1998, a period was substituted for a semicolon at the end of subsection (a).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-4-41. Qualifications for license; examination; internship and other training programs.

(a) **Qualifications.** To obtain a license to engage in the practice of pharmacy, an applicant for licensure by examination shall:

(1) Have submitted an application in the form prescribed by the board;

(2) Have attained the age of majority;

(3) Be of good moral character;

(4) Have graduated and received a professional undergraduate degree from a college or school of pharmacy as the same may be approved by the board; provided, however, that, since it would be impractical for the board to evaluate a school or college of pharmacy located in another country, the board may accept a graduate from such a school or college so long as the graduate has completed all requirements of the Foreign Pharmacy Equivalency Certification Program administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. This shall include successful completion of all required examinations and the issuance of the equivalency certificate and be based upon an individual evaluation by the board of the applicant's educational experience, professional background, and proficiency in the English language;

(5) Have completed an internship or other program that has been approved by the board or demonstrated to the board's satisfaction that experience in the practice of pharmacy which meets or exceeds the minimum internship requirements of the board;

(6) Have successfully passed an examination or examinations approved by the board; and

(7) Have paid the fees specified by the board for the examination and any related materials and have paid for the issuance of the license.

(b) **Examinations.**

(1) The examination for licensure required under paragraph (6) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be made available at least two times during each year. The board shall determine the content and subject matter of each examination, and the place, time, and date of administration of the examination.

(2) The examination shall be prepared to measure the competence of the applicant to engage in the practice of pharmacy. The board may employ, cooperate, and contract with any organization or consultant in the preparation and grading of an examination, but shall retain the sole discretion and responsibility for determining which applicants have successfully passed such an examination.

(3) Any person who takes the board approved examination and fails the examination may repeat the examination at regular intervals of administration; however, a person shall not take the examination more than three times without permission from the board. A person who has taken the board approved examination and failed the examination for the third time shall not practice as a pharmacy intern. A person who takes the board approved examination and successfully completes the examination must become licensed within two years of the examination date or the results of the examination shall become invalid.

(c) Internship and other training programs.

(1) All applicants for licensure by examination shall obtain practical experience in the practice of pharmacy concurrent with or after college attendance or both under such terms and conditions as the board shall determine.

(2) The board shall establish such licensure requirements for interns and standards for internship or any other experiential program necessary to qualify an applicant for the licensure examination and shall also determine the qualifications of preceptors used in practical experience programs.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-41, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 4; Ga. L. 2000, p. 136, § 26; Ga. L. 2010, p. 266, § 2/SB 195; Ga. L. 2011, p. 752, § 26/HB 142.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1998, “Internship and other training programs” was substituted for “Internship and Other Training Programs” in subsection (c).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor’s notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1313 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Licensed pharmacist presumed to know effects of habit-forming drugs. — Pharmacist in this state must be a graduate of a recognized college of phar-

macy and must have had 12 months of practical experience before being licensed; it is thus not necessary to allege that a licensed pharmacist would know the effects of habit-forming drugs. *Morris v. Owen*, 102 Ga. App. 71, 115 S.E.2d 604, 1960 Ga. App. LEXIS 557 (1960) (decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1313).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under former Code 1933, Ch. 84-13, and former Code Section 26-4-72 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Applicants not graduates of recognized schools of pharmacy may not take examination. — State Board of Pharmacy may not grant an examination to an applicant who is not a graduate of a recognized school or college of pharmacy. 1945-47 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 509 (decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1313).

Person who fails to pass the first pharmacist examination may take another one. 1950-51 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 143 (decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1314).

Alien may take examination for a license as a pharmacist but may not be licensed until the alien has become a citizen. 1948-49 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 330 (decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1311).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, § 89.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 65 et seq., 79 et seq.

ALR.

Right to enjoin business competitor from unlicensed or otherwise illegal acts or practices, 90 A.L.R.2d 7.

26-4-42. License transfers for pharmacists licensed in another jurisdiction.

(a) In order for a pharmacist currently licensed in another jurisdiction to obtain a license as a pharmacist by license transfer in this state, an applicant shall:

(1) Complete and file a form applying for licensure with the board, which form shall include the applicant's name, address, and other such information as prescribed by the board, and, after an investigation by agents acting on behalf of the board, if so requested by the board, produce evidence satisfactory to the board which shows the applicant has the age, moral character, background, education, and experience demanded of applicants for registration by examination under this chapter and by the rules and regulations promulgated under this chapter;

(2) Have attained the age of majority;

(3) Be of good moral character;

(4) Have possessed at the time of initial licensure as a pharmacist all qualifications necessary to have been eligible for licensure at that time in this state;

(5) Have presented to the board proof of initial licensure by examination and proof that such license is in good standing;

(6) Have presented to the board proof that any other license granted to the applicant by any other state has not been suspended, revoked, or otherwise restricted for any reason except nonrenewal or for the failure to obtain the required continuing education credits in any state where the applicant is currently licensed but not engaged in the practice of pharmacy;

(7) Have successfully passed examinations as determined by the board, one of which shall include an examination on Georgia pharmacy law and board regulations; and

(8) Have paid the fees specified by the board.

(b) No applicant shall be eligible for license transfer unless the state in which the applicant was licensed as a pharmacist also grants licensure transfer to pharmacists duly licensed by examination in this state under like circumstances and conditions.

(c) To obtain a license to engage in the practice of pharmacy in this state, a pharmacist who is a graduate of a pharmacy school or college located in another country must complete all requirements of the Foreign Pharmacy Equivalency Certification Program administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. This shall include without being limited to successful completion of all required examinations, the issuance of the equivalency certificate, and an individual evaluation by the board of the applicant's proficiency in the English language. Additionally, a foreign pharmacy graduate applicant shall:

(1) Have submitted an application in the form prescribed by the board;

(2) Have attained the age of majority;

(3) Be of good moral character;

(4) Have possessed at the time of initial licensure as a pharmacist all qualifications necessary to have been eligible for licensure at that time in this state;

(5) Have graduated and been granted a pharmacy degree from a college or school of pharmacy recognized by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Foreign Pharmacy Graduate Examination Committee;

(6) Have successfully passed an examination approved by the board; and

(7) Have paid the fees specified by the board.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-42, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 5; Ga. L. 2010, p. 266, § 3/SB 195; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 2/HB 209.

26-4-43. Temporary licenses.

(a) A temporary license may be issued by the executive director upon the approval of the president of the board if an applicant produces satisfactory evidence of fulfilling the requirements for licensure under this article, except the examination requirement, and evidence of an emergency situation justifying such temporary license. Except as provided in subsection (b) of this Code section, temporary licenses shall expire at the end of the month following the third board meeting conducted after the issuance of such license and may not be reissued or renewed.

(b) A temporary license may be issued to a service member, as defined in Code Section 26-4-44.2, for a period of six months. The board shall promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate this subsection.

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this Code section, applicants who have been accepted for a pharmacy resident position in this state may be issued a temporary license if they meet the examination requirement for licensure as specified by the board.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-43, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-12/HB 132; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 3/HB 926.

26-4-44. Renewal of licenses.

(a) Each pharmacist shall apply for renewal of his or her license biennially pursuant to the rules and regulations promulgated by the board. A pharmacist who desires to continue in the practice of pharmacy in this state shall file with the board an application in such form and containing such data as the board may require for renewal of the license. Notice of any change of employment or change of business address shall be filed with the executive director within ten days after such change. If the board finds that the applicant has been licensed and that such license has not been revoked or placed under suspension and that the applicant has paid the renewal fee, has continued his or her pharmacy education in accordance with Code Section 26-4-45 and the rules and regulations of the board, and is entitled to continue in the practice of pharmacy, then the board shall issue a license to the applicant.

(b) If a pharmacist fails to make application to the board for renewal of his or her license as set forth in and in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, the pharmacist must apply for reinstatement pursuant to the rules of the board.

History.

1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706,
Code 1981, § 26-4-44, enacted by Ga. L. § 19; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-13/HB 132.

26-4-44.1. Inactive license status.

(a) The board shall provide by rule for an inactive pharmacist license status for those individuals who elect to apply for such status. Persons who are granted inactive status shall be exempt from the requirements of continuing pharmaceuticals education.

(b) The board shall provide by rule for reactivation of a pharmacist license for those persons who wish to have an active license. Such individuals must first file a reactivation application with the board and comply with the requirements for reactivation as set forth by board rule.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-44.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 6.

26-4-44.2. Exceptions for active duty service members.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “service member” means an active duty member of the regular or reserve component of the United States Armed forces, the United States Coast Guard, the Georgia National Guard, or the Georgia Air National Guard who was on ordered federal duty for a period of 90 days or longer.

(b) Any service member whose license issued pursuant to this article expired while such service member was serving on active duty outside the state shall be permitted to practice pharmacy in accordance with such expired license and shall not be charged with a violation of this chapter related to practicing pharmacy with an expired license for a period of six months from the date of his or her discharge from active duty or reassignment to a location within the state. Any such service member shall be entitled to renew such expired license without penalty within six months after the date of his or her discharge from active duty or reassignment to a location within the state. The service member must present to the board either a copy of the official military orders or a written verification signed by the service member’s commanding officer to waive any charges.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-44.2, enacted by Ga.
L. 2005, p. 213, § 2/SB 258.

26-4-45. Continuing professional pharmaceutical education requirements.

The board shall establish a program of continuing professional pharmaceutical education for the renewal of pharmacist licenses. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, no pharmacist license shall be renewed by the board or the executive director until the pharmacist submits to the board satisfactory proof of his or her participation, during the biennium preceding his or her application for renewal, in a minimum of 30 hours of approved programs of continuing professional pharmacy education as defined in this Code section. Continuing professional pharmacy education shall consist of educational programs providing training pertinent to the practice of pharmacy and approved by the board under this Code section. The board shall approve educational programs for persons practicing pharmacy in this state on a reasonable nondiscriminatory fee basis and may contract with institutions of higher learning, professional organizations, or qualified individuals for the providing of approved programs. In addition to such programs, the board shall allow the continuing professional pharmacy education requirement to be fulfilled by the completion of approved correspondence courses which provide the required hours of approved programs of continuing professional pharmaceutical education or to be fulfilled by a combination of approved correspondence courses and other approved educational programs. The board may, consistent with the requirements of this Code section, promulgate rules and regulations to implement and administer this Code section, including the establishment of a committee to prescribe standards, approve and contract for educational programs, and set the required minimum number of hours per year.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, Code 1981, § 26-4-45, enacted by Ga. L. § 19; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-14/HB 132.

26-4-46. Pharmacy intern licenses; eligibility; requirements.

(a) To obtain a license as a pharmacy intern, an applicant shall:

- (1) Have submitted an application in the form prescribed by the board of pharmacy;
- (2) Have attained the age of majority;
- (3) Be of good moral character; and
- (4) Have paid the fees specified by the board for the issuance of the license.

(b) The following individuals shall be eligible to be licensed as a pharmacy intern:

(1) A student who is currently enrolled in an approved school or college of pharmacy;

(2) An individual who is a graduate of an approved school or college of pharmacy who is currently licensed by the board for the purpose of obtaining practical experience as a requirement for licensure as a pharmacist; or

(3) An individual who does not meet the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection and is a graduate of a pharmacy school or college located in another country but who has completed all requirements of the Foreign Pharmacy Equivalency Certification Program administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. This shall include without being limited to successful completion of all required examinations, the issuance of the equivalency certificate, and an individual evaluation by the board of the applicant's proficiency in the English language.

(c) The board shall approve all internship programs for the purpose of providing the practical experience necessary for licensure as a pharmacist. A pharmacy intern is authorized to engage in the practice of pharmacy under the supervision of a pharmacist. The board shall adopt rules regarding the licensure of interns and the standards for internship programs.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-46, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 7; Ga. L. 2010, p. 266, § 4/SB 195.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1999, "paragraphs" was substituted for "paragraph" in paragraph (b)(3).

26-4-47. Validity of pharmacy intern licenses.

(a) Licenses issued under Code Section 26-4-46 shall bear the date of issuance and shall be valid for up to five years. Unless said license is renewed by the board, the license shall expire.

(b) Any license issued pursuant to Code Section 26-4-46 shall expire at the time a pharmacy intern is expelled, suspended, dismissed, or withdraws from an approved school or college of pharmacy or is otherwise licensed as a pharmacist pursuant to this title.

(c) Any license issued pursuant to Code Section 26-4-46 shall expire upon notification that a person has taken and failed the board examination for the third time.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-47, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-48. Renewal of pharmacy intern licenses.

Licenses issued pursuant to Code Section 26-4-46 which shall expire by lapse of time may be renewed upon application, unless, at the time of expiration, there shall be pending action before the board to suspend or revoke such license.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-48, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-49. Drug researcher permits; application for registration; fees; suspension or revocation; penalty for violations.

(a) Every person, firm, corporation, agency, department, or other entity located within this state which handles, possesses, or utilizes controlled substances or dangerous drugs, as defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16, for the purposes of conducting research, analysis, animal training, or drug education, as such purposes may be further defined by the board, and is not otherwise registered as a pharmacist, pharmacy, drug wholesaler, distributor, supplier, or practitioner shall biennially register with the State Board of Pharmacy for a drug researcher permit which shall entitle the holder thereof to purchase, receive, possess, or dispose of such controlled substances and dangerous drugs for such purposes. In applying for the permit:

(1) The application for registration shall be made on a form to be prescribed and furnished by said board and shall show at a minimum the name of the person responsible for filing the application, the name of the applying firm, corporation, agency, department, or other entity, if applicable, the address where the controlled substances or dangerous drugs will be kept secured and can be inspected by the board, together with such other information as may be required by the board;

(2) The person filing the application for the permit shall be the responsible person for the safe and proper storage and accountability, as defined under Chapter 13 of Title 16, for any and all controlled substances and dangerous drugs. Such person shall be responsible for maintaining exact and accurate records regarding the purchase, receipt, utilization, and disposal of all controlled substances and dangerous drugs utilized for purposes granted by this permit. All records must be maintained for a minimum of two years and be readily available for inspection by agents of the board; and

(3) Before approval by the board for any permit issued under this Code section, the application for registration must successfully undergo a thorough investigation by agents of the board to ensure the applicant complies with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations

pursuant to handling controlled substances and dangerous drugs as defined under Chapter 13 of Title 16.

(b) The board may require that the application for registration as a drug researcher be accompanied by a fee in an amount established under rules promulgated by the board, and the board may establish conditions for exemptions from such fees. Such registration shall not be transferable and shall expire on the expiration date established by the executive director and may be renewed pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the board. If not renewed, the registration shall lapse and become null and void.

(c) The board shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the holder of a drug researcher permit as defined under this Code section.

(d) A drug researcher permit may be suspended or revoked or the registrant may be reprimanded, fined, or placed on probation by the board if the registrant fails to comply with all applicable local, state, or federal laws, rules, and regulations.

(e) A holder of a drug researcher permit who is not also licensed as a pharmacist practicing in a duly licensed pharmacy shall not engage in the sale, distribution, or dispensing of controlled substances or dangerous drugs.

(f) Any person, firm, or corporation which violates any provision of this Code section shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than five years or by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.00 or both.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-49, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19; Ga. L. 2003, p. 140, § 26; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-15/HB 132.

26-4-50. Drug therapy modification certification.

(a) No pharmacist shall be authorized to modify drug therapy pursuant to Code Section 43-34-24 unless that pharmacist:

- (1) Is licensed to practice as a pharmacist in this state;
- (2) Has successfully completed a course of study regarding modification of drug therapy and approved by the board;
- (3) Annually successfully completes a continuing education program regarding modification of drug therapy and approved by the board; and
- (4) Is certified by the board as meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subsection.

(b) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to expand or change any existing authority for a pharmacist to substitute drugs.

History. 2000, p. 558, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 859,
Code 1981, § 26-4-50, enacted by Ga. L. § 6/HB 509.

26-4-51. Durable medical equipment supplier license; requirements; exemptions; rules and regulations.

(a) Any person who supplies durable medical equipment to a consumer and submits a claim for reimbursement by a third party, either directly or through a contractual arrangement, shall possess a durable medical equipment supplier license issued by the board pursuant to this Code section.

(b) The board shall be authorized to issue a license to an applicant for licensure as a durable medical equipment supplier if the applicant:

- (1) Submits an application in the form prescribed by the board;
- (2) Maintains an office or place of business within this state;
- (3) Pays the license fee established by the board pursuant to paragraph (37) of subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-28; and
- (4) Meets all safety standards and requirements established by the board, including but not limited to the establishment of written procedures for:
 - (A) Ensuring that all personnel engaged in delivery, maintenance, and repair of durable medical equipment receives annual continuing education;
 - (B) Instructing the patient or patient's caregiver on how to use the durable medical equipment provided;
 - (C) Receiving and responding to complaints from patients;
 - (D) Maintaining records of all patients receiving durable medical equipment; and
 - (E) Management, maintenance, and servicing of durable medical equipment.

(c) The board may issue a license to a Medicare enrolled out-of-state manufacturer or wholesale distributor that provides durable medical equipment directly to consumers if such manufacturer or wholesale distributor possesses a valid license from another state. Such manufacturer or wholesale distributor shall be exempt from the requirements of paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this Code section.

(d) Licenses issued pursuant to this Code section shall be effective

for 36 months from the date of issuance and shall not be transferable or assignable.

(e) The board may refuse to issue or renew, or may suspend, revoke, or restrict the licenses of, or fine any person pursuant to the procedures set forth in Code Section 26-4-60 for any of the grounds set forth in subsection (a) of such Code section or upon a finding that the applicant or licensee:

(1) Has violated any state or federal law or regulation related to the provision of durable medical equipment; or

(2) Fails to meet the safety standards established by the board.

(f) The board reserves the right to initially and periodically inspect the applicant's or licensee's office or place of business within this state. Such applicant or licensee shall be required to pay a reasonable and adequate fee established by the board pursuant to paragraph (37) of subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-28 to cover the cost of such inspections.

(g) The following persons and entities shall be exempt from the requirements of this Code section unless any such person or entity has a separate company, corporation, or division that is in the business of supplying durable medical equipment to consumers and submits a claim for reimbursement by a third party:

(1) Pharmacies and pharmacists;

(2) Hospitals;

(3) Ambulatory surgical centers;

(4) Health care facilities owned or operated by the state or federal government;

(5) Skilled nursing facilities;

(6) Assisted living facilities;

(7) Health care practitioners who:

(A) Provide durable medical equipment within the scope of practice of the health care practitioner's profession; and

(B) Are licensed in this state to practice the health care practitioner's profession;

(8) Suppliers of insulin infusion pumps and related supplies or services;

(9) Manufacturers or wholesale distributors that do not sell or rent durable medical equipment directly to consumers;

(10) Renal dialysis providers licensed under Code Section 31-44-4 and persons or entities that distribute devices necessary to perform home renal dialysis to patients with chronic kidney disease; and

(11) Suppliers of osteogenesis stimulators, transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulators, pneumatic compression devices, and related supplies or services.

(h) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section. Such rules and regulations shall be established with the intent of ensuring patient safety and quality of durable medical equipment. The board may provide by rules and regulations that any person accredited by organizations recognized by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is deemed to meet all or some of the requirements of this Code section. Further, the board shall be authorized to require the completion of background checks, including, but not limited to, criminal history record checks, on any applicants or licensees, on any persons who will have direct contact with patients, and on any other licensee personnel deemed necessary for purposes of patient safety.

(i) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to restrict or prohibit the ability of a person or business to engage in a private transaction between two parties.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-51, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 614, § 3/SB 41.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Durable Medical Equipment Suppliers,

Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-7B-.01 et seq.

26-4-52. Administration of vaccines by pharmacy technicians; requirements; role of supervising pharmacist.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term “vaccine” means any COVID-19 vaccine and any vaccine that is included on the adult immunization schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(b) At the discretion of a supervising pharmacist, a qualified pharmacy technician may be authorized to administer vaccines pursuant to this Code section under the following conditions:

(1) The vaccine administration has been delegated by the supervising pharmacist to the qualified pharmacy technician;

(2) The supervising pharmacist shall be readily and immediately available to the qualified pharmacy technician administering the vaccine;

(3) The vaccine shall be administered only to individuals 18 years of age or older;

(4) The vaccine being administered shall be authorized or licensed for use by the federal Food and Drug Administration; and

(5) In the case of a COVID-19 vaccine, the vaccine shall be dispensed and administered according to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 vaccine recommendations.

(c) In order to become a qualified pharmacy technician and be authorized to administer vaccines pursuant to this Code section, a pharmacy technician shall:

(1) Have completed a course of training accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education or similar health authority or professional body approved by the board that includes hands-on injection techniques and the recognition and treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines;

(2) Hold current certification in Basic Cardiac Life Support; and

(3) Have completed a minimum of two hours of training of immunization related continuing pharmacy education approved by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education or similar health authority or professional body approved by the board during each biennium preceding application for renewal of his or her certificate of registration.

(d) The supervising pharmacist shall:

(1) Comply with record-keeping and reporting requirements established by the board;

(2) Make documented reasonable efforts to obtain the name of the patient's primary care provider and to notify such primary care provider of the vaccine administered by the qualified pharmacy technician within 72 hours of administration;

(3) Be responsible for complying with requirements related to reporting adverse events;

(4) Check the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services established pursuant to Code Section 31-12-3.1 prior to dispensing the vaccine to be administered by the qualified pharmacy technician and enter the patient's vaccine information in such registry in accordance with the registry's designated time frame and other requirements; and

(5) Comply with any applicable requirements or conditions of use set forth in the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

COVID-19 vaccine provider agreement and any other federal requirements that apply to the administration of COVID-19 vaccines.

(e) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section.

(f) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to require any pharmacist to authorize a pharmacy technician to administer vaccines pursuant to this Code section or to require any pharmacy technician to administer vaccines pursuant to this Code section.

(g) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to authorize a qualified pharmacy technician to order vaccines.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-52, enacted by Ga. L. 2023, p. 392, § 1/HB 416, effective May 2, 2023.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective May 2, 2023.

ARTICLE 4

DISCIPLINE

26-4-60. Grounds for suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue or renew licenses.

(a) The board of pharmacy may refuse to issue or renew, or may suspend, revoke, or restrict the licenses of, or fine any person pursuant to the procedures set forth in this Code section, upon one or more of the following grounds:

(1) Engaging in any unprofessional, immoral, unethical, deceptive, or deleterious conduct or practice harmful to the public, which conduct or practice materially affects the fitness of the licensee or applicant to practice pharmacy or another business or profession licensed under this chapter, or of a nature likely to jeopardize the interest of the public, which conduct or practice need not have resulted in actual injury to any person or be directly related to the practice of pharmacy or another licensed business or profession but shows that the licensee or applicant has committed any act or omission which is indicative of bad moral character or untrustworthiness; unprofessional conduct shall also include any departure from, or the failure to conform to, the minimal reasonable standards of acceptable and prevailing practices of the business or profession licensed under this chapter;

(2) Incapacity that prevents a licensee from engaging in the practice of pharmacy or another business or profession licensed under this chapter with reasonable skill, competence, and safety to the public;

(3) Being:

(A) Convicted of a felony;

(B) Convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude in this state or any other state, territory, or country or in the courts of the United States; or

(C) Convicted or guilty of violations of the pharmacy or drug laws of this state, or rules and regulations pertaining thereto, or of laws, rules, and regulations of any other state, or of the federal government;

(4) Knowingly making misleading, deceptive, untrue, or fraudulent representations in the practice of a business or profession licensed under this chapter or on any document connected therewith; practicing fraud or deceit or intentionally making any false statement in obtaining a license to practice the licensed business or profession; or making a false statement or deceptive registration with the board;

(5) Engaging or aiding and abetting an individual to engage in the practice of pharmacy without a license falsely using the title of “pharmacist” or “pharmacy intern,” or falsely using the term “pharmacy” in any manner;

(6) Failing to pay the costs assessed in a disciplinary hearing pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 26-4-28;

(7)(A) Becoming unfit or incompetent to practice pharmacy by reason of:

(i) Intemperance in the use of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or habit-forming drugs or stimulants; or

(ii) Any abnormal physical or mental condition which threatens the safety of persons to whom such person may compound or dispense prescriptions, drugs, or devices or for whom he or she might manufacture, prepare, or package or supervise the manufacturing, preparation, or packaging of prescriptions, drugs, or devices.

(B) In enforcing this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, require a licensee or applicant to submit to a mental or physical examination by licensed health care providers designated by the board. The results of such examination shall be admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section 24-5-501. Every person who accepts the privilege of practicing pharmacy in this state or who files an application for a license to practice pharmacy in this

state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to submit to such mental or physical examination and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of the results in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the same constitutes a privileged communication. If a licensee or applicant fails to submit to such an examination when properly directed to do so by the board, unless such failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control, the board may enter a final order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal. Any licensee or applicant who is prohibited from practicing pharmacy under this paragraph shall at reasonable intervals be afforded an opportunity to demonstrate to the board that he or she can resume or begin the practice of pharmacy with reasonable skill and safety to patients.

(C) For the purposes of this paragraph, the board may, upon reasonable grounds, obtain any and all records relating to the mental or physical condition of a licensee or applicant, including psychiatric records; and such records shall be admissible in any hearing before the board, notwithstanding any claim of privilege under a contrary rule of law or statute, including, but not limited to, Code Section 24-5-501. Every person who accepts the privilege of practicing pharmacy in this state or who files an application for a license to practice pharmacy in this state shall be deemed to have given his or her consent to the board's obtaining any such records and to have waived all objections to the admissibility of such records in any hearing before the board, upon the grounds that the same constitutes a privileged communication.

(D) If any licensee or applicant could, in the absence of this paragraph, invoke a privilege to prevent the disclosure of the results of the examination provided for in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph or the records relating to the mental or physical condition of such licensee or applicant obtained pursuant to subparagraph (C) of this paragraph, all such information shall be received by the board in camera and shall not be disclosed to the public, nor shall any part of the record containing such information be used against any licensee or applicant in any other type of proceeding;

(8) Being adjudged mentally incompetent by a court of competent jurisdiction within or outside this state; any such adjudication shall automatically suspend the license of any such person and shall prevent the reissuance or renewal of any license so suspended for as long as the adjudication of incompetence is in effect;

(9) Violating any rules and regulations promulgated by the board;

(10) Promoting to the public in any manner a drug which may be dispensed only pursuant to prescription;

(11) Regularly employing the mails or other common carriers to sell, distribute, and deliver a drug which requires a prescription directly to a patient; provided, however, that this provision shall not prohibit the use of the mails or other common carriers to sell, distribute, and deliver a prescription drug directly to:

(A) A patient or directly to a patient's guardian or caregiver or a physician or physician acting as the patient's agent for whom the prescription drug was prescribed if:

(i) Such prescription drugs are prescribed for complex chronic, terminal, or rare conditions;

(ii) Such prescription drugs require special administration, comprehensive patient training, or the provision of supplies and medical devices or have unique patient compliance and safety monitoring requirements;

(iii) Due to the prescription drug's high monetary cost, short shelf life, special manufacturer specified packaging and shipping requirements or instructions which require temperature sensitive storage and handling, limited availability or distribution, or other factors, the drugs are not carried in the regular inventories of retail pharmacies such that the drugs could be immediately dispensed to multiple retail walk-in patients;

(iv) Such prescription drug has an annual retail value to the patient of more than \$10,000.00;

(v) The patient receiving the prescription drug consents to the delivery of the prescription drug via expedited overnight common carrier and designates the specialty pharmacy to receive the prescription drug on his or her behalf;

(vi) The specialty pharmacy utilizes a shipping method, as appropriate and in accordance with standards of the manufacturer, United States Pharmacopeia, and United States Food and Drug Administration and other recognized standards. The shipping method may include the use of temperature tags, time temperature strips, insulated packaging, or a combination of these;

(vii) The specialty pharmacy establishes and notifies the enrollee of its policies and procedures to address instances in which medications do not arrive in a timely manner or in which they have been compromised during shipment and to assure that the pharmacy replaces or makes provisions to replace such drugs; and

(viii) Except as otherwise provided in division (vi) of this subparagraph, the specialty pharmacy complies with the rules

and regulations of the State Board of Pharmacy regarding delivery by mail;

(B) An institution or to sell, distribute, or deliver prescription drugs, upon his or her request, to an enrollee in a health benefits plan of a group model health maintenance organization or its affiliates by a pharmacy which is operated by that same group model health maintenance organization and licensed under Code Section 26-4-110 or to a patient on behalf of a pharmacy. Any pharmacy using the mails or other common carriers to dispense prescriptions pursuant to this paragraph shall comply with the following conditions:

(i) The pharmacy shall provide an electronic, telephonic, or written communications mechanism which reasonably determines whether the medications distributed by the mails or other common carriers have been received by the enrollee and through which a pharmacist employed by the group model health maintenance organization or a pharmacy intern under his or her direct supervision is enabled to offer counseling to the enrollee as authorized by and in accordance with his or her obligations under Code Section 26-4-85, unless the enrollee refuses such consultation or counseling pursuant to subsection (e) of such Code section. In addition, the enrollee shall receive information indicating what he or she should do if the integrity of the packaging or medication has been compromised during shipment;

(ii) Except as otherwise provided in division (iii) of this subparagraph, the pharmacy complies with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Pharmacy regarding delivery by mail, including special conditions on the mailing of certain drugs and, if necessary, restriction from delivery of certain substances by mail; provided, however, that the State Board of Pharmacy shall not promulgate a list of medications which may not be delivered by the mails or other common carriers. If, however, the State Board of Pharmacy bans a medication from being sold in this state, either over the counter or otherwise, then such medication shall not be delivered by mail. Nothing herein shall require a dispensing pharmacy to deliver by mail those medications which, in the professional opinion of the dispensing pharmacist, may be clinically compromised by distribution through the mails or other common carriers;

(iii) The pharmacy shall utilize a shipping method, as appropriate and in accordance with standards of the manufacturer, United States Pharmacopeia, and United States Food and Drug Administration and other recognized standards. The shipping

method may include the use of temperature tags, time temperature strips, insulated packaging, or a combination of these; and

(iv) The pharmacy shall establish and notify the enrollee of its policies and procedures to address instances in which medications do not arrive in a timely manner or in which they have been compromised during shipment and to assure that the pharmacy replaces or makes provisions to replace such drugs.

For purposes of this subparagraph, the term “group model health maintenance organization” means a health maintenance organization that has an exclusive contract with a medical group practice to provide or arrange for the provision of substantially all physician services to enrollees in health benefits plans of the health maintenance organization; or

(C) A pharmacist or pharmacy to dispense a prescription and deliver it to another pharmacist or pharmacy to make available for a patient to receive the prescription and patient counseling according to Code Section 26-4-85. The State Board of Pharmacy shall adopt any rules and regulations necessary to implement this subparagraph;

(12) Unless otherwise authorized by law, dispensing or causing to be dispensed a different drug or brand of drug in place of the drug or brand of drug ordered or prescribed without the prior authorization of the practitioner ordering or prescribing the same;

(13) Violating or attempting to violate a statute, law, or any lawfully promulgated rule or regulation of this state, any other state, the board, the United States, or any other lawful authority without regard to whether the violation is criminally punishable, when such statute, law, rule, or regulation relates to or in part regulates the practice of pharmacy or another business or profession licensed under this chapter, when the licensee or applicant knows or should know that such action violates such statute, law, or rule; or violating either a public or confidential lawful order of the board previously entered by the board in a disciplinary hearing, consent decree, or license reinstatement;

(14) Having his or her license to practice pharmacy or another business or profession licensed under this chapter revoked, suspended, or annulled by any lawful licensing authority of this or any other state, having disciplinary action taken against him or her by any lawful licensing authority of this or any other state, or being denied a license or renewal by any lawful licensing authority of this or any other state;

(15) Failure to demonstrate the qualifications or standards for a license contained in this Code section or under the laws, rules, or

regulations under which licensure is sought or held; it shall be incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board that he or she meets all the requirements for the issuance of a license, and if the board is not satisfied as to the applicant's qualifications, it may deny a license without a prior hearing; provided, however, that the applicant shall be allowed to appear before the board if he or she so desires; or

(16) Knowingly performing any act which in any way aids, assists, procures, advises, or encourages any unlicensed person or any licensee whose license has been suspended or revoked by the board to practice pharmacy or another business or profession licensed under this chapter or to practice outside the scope of any disciplinary limitation placed upon the licensee by the board.

(b) The board shall have the power to suspend or revoke the license of the pharmacist in charge when a complete and accurate record of all controlled substances on hand, received, manufactured, sold, dispensed, or otherwise disposed of has not been kept by the pharmacy in conformance with the record-keeping and inventory requirements of federal law and the rules of the board.

(c) Any person whose license to practice pharmacy in this state has been suspended, revoked, or restricted pursuant to this chapter, whether voluntarily or by action of the board, shall have the right, at reasonable intervals, to petition the board for reinstatement of such license pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the board. Such petition shall be made in writing and in the form prescribed by the board. The board may, in its discretion, grant or deny such petition, or it may modify its original finding to reflect any circumstances which have changed sufficiently to warrant such modifications.

(d) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed as barring criminal prosecutions for violations of this chapter.

(e) All final decisions by the board shall be subject to judicial review pursuant to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."

(f) Any individual or entity whose license to practice pharmacy is revoked, suspended, or not renewed shall return his or her license to the offices of the board within ten days after receipt of notice of such action.

(g) For purposes of this Code section, a conviction shall include a finding or verdict of guilty or a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or no contest in a criminal proceeding, regardless of whether the adjudication of guilt or sentence is withheld or not entered thereon.

(h) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed as barring or prohibiting pharmacists from providing or distributing health or drug

product information or materials to patients which are intended to improve the health care of patients.

(i) The board shall have the power to suspend any license issued under Article 3 of this chapter when such holder is not in compliance with a court order for child support as provided in Code Section 19-6-28.1 or 19-11-9.3. The board shall also have the power to deny the application for issuance or renewal of a license under Article 3 of this chapter when such applicant is not in compliance with a court order for child support as provided in either of such Code sections. The hearings and appeals procedures provided for in such Code sections shall be the only such procedures required to suspend or deny any license issued under Article 3 of this chapter.

(j) Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit any person from assisting any duly licensed pharmacist or practitioner in the measuring of quantities of medication and the typing of labels therefor, but excluding the dispensing, compounding, or mixing of drugs, provided that such duly licensed pharmacist or practitioner shall be physically present in the dispensing area and actually observing the actions of such person in doing such measuring and typing, and provided, further, that no prescription shall be given to the person requesting the same unless the contents and the label thereof shall have been verified by a licensed pharmacist or practitioner.

(k) The board shall not have the power to suspend any license issued under Article 3 of this chapter because such holder is a borrower in default who is not in satisfactory repayment status under the Georgia Higher Education Loan Program as determined by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation or who has been certified by any entity of the federal government for nonpayment or default or breach of a repayment or service obligation under any federal educational loan, loan repayment, or service conditional scholarship program. The board shall also not have the power to deny the application for issuance or renewal of a license under Article 3 of this chapter because such applicant is a borrower in default under the Georgia Higher Education Loan Program as determined by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation or has been certified by any entity of the federal government for nonpayment or default or breach of a repayment or service obligation under any federal educational loan, loan repayment, or service conditional scholarship program.

(l)(1) The executive director is vested with the power and authority to make or cause to be made through employees or agents of the board or the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency such investigations as he or she or the board may deem necessary or proper for the enforcement of the provisions of this Code section and the laws relating to the practice of pharmacy and other businesses and professions licensed

by the board. Any person properly conducting an investigation on behalf of the board shall have access to and may examine any writing, document, or other material relating to the fitness of any licensee or applicant. The executive director or his or her appointed representative may issue subpoenas to compel access to any writing, document, or other material upon a determination that reasonable grounds exist for the belief that a violation of this Code section or any other law relating to the practice of pharmacy or other business or profession subject to regulation or licensing by the board may have taken place. Notwithstanding the provisions of this paragraph, Code Section 16-13-60 shall control the access to or release of information.

(2) If a licensee is the subject of a board inquiry, all records relating to any person who receives services rendered by that licensee in his or her capacity as licensee shall be admissible at any hearing held to determine whether a violation of this chapter has taken place, regardless of any statutory privilege; provided, however, that any documentary evidence relating to a person who received those services shall be reviewed in camera and shall not be disclosed to the public.

(m) A person, firm, corporation, association, authority, or other entity shall be immune from civil and criminal liability for reporting or investigating the acts or omissions of a licensee or applicant which violate the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section or any other provision of law relating to a licensee's or applicant's fitness to practice a business or profession licensed under this chapter, or for initiating or conducting proceedings against such licensee or applicant, if such report is made or action is taken in good faith, without fraud or malice. Any person who testifies or who makes a recommendation to the board in the nature of peer review, in good faith, without fraud or malice, before the board in any proceeding involving the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section or any other law relating to a licensee's or applicant's fitness to practice the business or profession licensed by the board shall be immune from civil and criminal liability for so testifying.

(n) Neither the issuance of a private reprimand nor the denial of a license by reciprocity nor the denial of a request for reinstatement of a revoked license nor the refusal to issue a previously denied license shall be considered to be a contested case within the meaning of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act"; notice and hearing within the meaning of such chapter shall not be required, but the applicant or licensee shall be allowed to appear before the board if he or she so requests. The board may resolve a pending action by the issuance of a letter of concern. Such letter shall not be considered a disciplinary action or a contested case under Chapter 13 of Title 50 and shall not be disclosed to any person except the licensee or applicant.

(o) If any licensee or applicant after reasonable notice fails to appear at any hearing of the board for that licensee or applicant, the board may proceed to hear the evidence against such licensee or applicant and take action as if such licensee or applicant had been present. A notice of hearing, initial or recommended decision, or final decision of the board in a disciplinary proceeding shall be served personally upon the licensee or applicant or served by certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested, to the last known address of record with the board. If such material is served by certified mail or statutory overnight delivery and is returned marked “unclaimed” or “refused” or is otherwise undeliverable and if the licensee or applicant cannot, after diligent effort, be located, the executive director, or his or her designee, shall be deemed to be the agent for service for such licensee or applicant for purposes of this Code section, and service upon the executive director, or his or her designee, shall be deemed to be service upon the licensee or applicant.

(p) Board proceedings that result in the voluntary surrender of a license or the failure to renew a license by the end of an established penalty period shall have the same effect as a revocation of such license, subject to reinstatement in the discretion of the board. The board may restore and reissue a license to practice under this chapter and, as a condition thereof, may impose any disciplinary sanction provided by this Code section or the provisions of this chapter.

(q) This Code section shall apply equally to all licensees or applicants whether individuals, partners, or members of any other incorporated or unincorporated associations, corporations, limited liability companies, or other associations of any kind whatsoever.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-60, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 8; Ga. L. 2006, p. 444, § 1/HB 246; Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 1/SB 205; Ga. L. 2011, p. 541, § 2/SB 81; Ga. L. 2012, p. 1092, § 1/SB 346; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-16/HB 132; Ga. L. 2016, p. 521, § 1/HB 886; Ga. L. 2017, p. 774, § 26/HB 323; Ga. L. 2019, p. 462, § 1-7/SB 214; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(16)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modern-

ize, and correct the Code, substituted “United States Food and Drug Administration” for “Federal Drug Administration” in the first sentence of divisions (a)(11)(A)(vi) and (a)(11)(B)(iii).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1998, the provisions enacted as subsection (d) of Code Section 26-4-78 by Ga. L. 1998, p. 1094, § 7, were redesignated as subsection (k) of this Code section and “are” was substituted for “is” near the end of subsection (h).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, decisions under former Code 1895, § 1729 and former Code 1910, § 1654 are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Pharmacy license as defense to drug possession charge. — Whether an individual has a license or is otherwise lawfully permitted to have in the individual's possession narcotic drugs is a matter of defense and not an element of the offense. *Woods v. State*, 233 Ga. 347, 211 S.E.2d 300, 1974 Ga. LEXIS 760 (1974).

Merchant may not compound medicines. *Lewis v. Brannen*, 6 Ga. App. 419, 65 S.E. 189, 1909 Ga. App. LEXIS 326 (1909) (decided under former Code 1895, § 1729).

Licensed pharmacist must be present when drugs sold or made. — Former Code 1895, § 1729 did not require the owner of a drugstore to be licensed if the owner employs a licensed manager, but other members of the firm cannot sell drugs or compound prescriptions during the absence of manager. *Sconyers v. State*, 6 Ga. App. 804, 65 S.E. 814, 1909 Ga. App. LEXIS 481 (1909) (decided under former Code 1895, § 1729).

Including all pharmaceutical preparations. — Former Code 1895, § 1729, which confined the compounding

and vending of drugs and medicines (with only certain enumerated exceptions) to licensed druggists, apothecaries, and pharmacists, relates to all pharmaceutical and medical preparations, whether recognized by the pharmacopoeia and other standard works or not. *Lewis v. Brannen*, 6 Ga. App. 419, 65 S.E. 189, 1909 Ga. App. LEXIS 326 (1909) (decided under former Code 1895, § 1729).

Employee or proprietor chargeable for selling morphine without prescription. — One who sells morphine not on the order or prescription of a licensed physician, dentist, or veterinary surgeon, is guilty of a misdemeanor without reference to whether the seller is the proprietor of a drugstore, or merely the employee of such proprietor. *Oppenheim v. State*, 12 Ga. App. 480, 77 S.E. 652, 1913 Ga. App. LEXIS 596 (1913) (decided under former Code 1910, § 1654).

Indictment showing defendant sold drugs and poisons without license sufficient. — Indictment charging the defendants with vending drugs and poisons without license contained the necessary allegations and exceptions, and was therefore a good and valid indictment. *Carter v. State*, 122 Ga. 175, 50 S.E. 64, 1905 Ga. LEXIS 147 (1905) (decided under former Code 1895, § 1729).

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, opinions under former Code 1933, §§ 79A-410 and 84-1317, are included in the annotations for this Code section.

Mailing of prescription drugs by pharmacists employed by the Veterans Administration does not violate Georgia law. 1973 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 73-59 (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-410).

Federal regulations preempt state law against mailing drugs. — Georgia law had no effect on a federal employee involved in a federal governmental function; because Veterans Administration pharmacists are authorized to dispense prescription drugs by mail, federal policy

conflicts with state law; where federal regulations promulgated to carry out federal statutes conflict with a state statute, the former will govern. 1973 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 73-59 (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-410).

Anyone not pharmacist or intern may only measure quantities of medication and type labels. — Individual working in a pharmacy who is neither a licensed pharmacist nor a licensed pharmacy intern may assist a pharmacist only to the extent of measuring the quantities of medication and/or the typing of labels. 1974 Op. Att'y Gen. No. U74-63 (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-410).

Board regulates dispensing of drugs in hospitals by machine or oth-

erwise. — Dispensing of drugs in hospitals by machine or otherwise is a matter which the legislature has left to the State Board of Pharmacy to regulate through the board's rule making power. 1969 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 69-85 (decided under former Code 1933, § 79A-410).

Merchant may sell home remedies (which probably would include mineral oil) without qualifying as a pharmacist. 1945-47 Ga. Op. Att'y Gen. 508 (decided under former Code 1933, § 84-1317).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

25 Am. Jur. 2d, Drugs and Controlled Substances, § 89 et seq.

C.J.S.

28 C.J.S., Drugs and Narcotics, §§ 65 et seq., 87 et seq.

ALR.

Revocation or suspension of license or permit to practice pharmacy or operate drugstore because of improper sale or distribution of narcotic or stimulant drugs, 17 A.L.R.3d 1408.

Validity and construction of prescription drug insurance plans, 42 A.L.R.3d 897.

Common-law right of action for damage sustained by plaintiff in consequence of sale or gift of intoxicating liquor or habit-forming drug to another, 97 A.L.R.3d 528; 62 A.L.R.4th 16.

Right of medical patient to obtain, or physician to prescribe, laetrile for treatment of illness — state cases, 5 A.L.R.4th 219.

26-4-61. Temporary suspension of license; notice; disciplinary hearings.

(a) The provisions of subsection (c) of Code Section 50-13-18 with respect to emergency action by a professional licensing board and summary suspension of a license are adopted and incorporated by reference into this Code section.

(b) Whenever a notice of summary suspension, notice of hearing, initial or recommended decision, or final decision of the board in a disciplinary proceeding is docketed, it shall be personally served upon the licensee or applicant or served by certified mail or statutory overnight delivery, return receipt requested, to the last known address of record with the board. If such material is served by certified mail or statutory overnight delivery and is returned marked "unclaimed" or "refused" or is otherwise undeliverable and if the licensee or applicant cannot, after reasonable effort, be located, the director for the board shall be deemed to be the agent for service for such licensee or applicant for purposes of this Code section and service upon the director shall be deemed to be service upon the licensee or applicant.

(c) If any licensee or applicant after reasonable notice fails to appear at any hearing of the board for that licensee or applicant, the board may proceed to hear the evidence against such licensee or applicant and take action as if such licensee or applicant had been present.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-61, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 9; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 3; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2000, p. 1589, § 16, not codified

by the General Assembly, provided that the amendment to subsection (b) is applicable with respect to notices delivered on or after July 1, 2000.

26-4-62. Penalty for violation of chapter.

Except as otherwise provided in this chapter or in Chapter 13 of Title 16, any violation of this chapter shall constitute a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-62, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 5

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Administrative rules and regulations.

Retail Pharmacy Regulations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-10-1-.01 et seq.

Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency (GDNA) Classifications and Minimum Requirements for Special Agents and Deputy Director, Official Compilation of the Rules

and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-14-.01.

Requirements of a Prescription Drug Order When Utilizing a Computer or Other Electronic Means, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-27-.01 et seq.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Liability of pharmacist who accurately

fills prescription for harm resulting to user, 44 A.L.R.5th 393.

26-4-80. License required for practice of pharmacy; dispensing of prescription drugs; prescription drug orders; electronically transmitted drug orders; refills; Schedule II controlled substance prescriptions.

(a) All persons engaging in the practice of pharmacy in this state must be licensed by the board.

(b) Prescription drugs shall be dispensed only pursuant to a valid prescription drug order. A pharmacist shall not dispense a prescription which the pharmacist knows or should know is not a valid prescription. A pharmacist shall have the same corresponding liability for prescriptions as an issuing practitioner as set forth in 21 C.F.R. Part 1304 as such regulation exists on January 1, 2013. Valid prescription drug orders shall include those issued by a physician, dentist, podiatrist, veterinar-

ian, or other person licensed, registered, or otherwise authorized under the laws of this state, or of any state or territory of the United States, to prescribe dangerous drugs or controlled substances or both.

(c) A prescription drug order may be accepted by a pharmacist or pharmacy intern or extern in written form, orally, via an electronic visual image prescription drug order, or via an electronic data prescription drug order as set forth in this chapter or as set forth in regulations promulgated by the board. Provisions for accepting a prescription drug order for a Schedule II controlled substance are set forth in subsection (1) of this Code section, the board's regulations, or the regulations of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration in 21 C.F.R. 1306. Electronic prescription drug orders shall either be an electronic visual image of a prescription drug order or an electronic data prescription drug order and shall meet the requirements set forth in regulations promulgated by the board. A hard copy prescription prepared by a practitioner or a practitioner's agent, which bears an electronic visual image of the practitioner's signature and is not sent by facsimile, must be printed on security paper. Prescriptions transmitted either electronically or via facsimile shall meet the following requirements:

(1) Electronically transmitted prescription drug orders shall be transmitted by the practitioner or, in the case of a prescription drug order to be transmitted via facsimile, by the practitioner or the practitioner's agent under supervision of the practitioner, to the pharmacy of the patient's choice with no intervening person or intermediary having access to the prescription drug order. For purposes of this paragraph, "intervening person or intermediary" shall not include a person who electronically formats or reconfigures data or information for purposes of integrating into and between computer or facsimile systems of practitioners and pharmacists;

(2) Prescription drug orders transmitted by facsimile or computer shall include:

(A) In the case of a prescription drug order for a dangerous drug, the complete name and address of the practitioner;

(B) In the case of a prescription drug order for a controlled substance, the complete name, address, and DEA registration number of the practitioner;

(C) The telephone number of the practitioner for verbal confirmation;

(D) The name and address of the patient, unless the prescription drug order is prescribed pursuant to expedited partner therapy in accordance with Code Section 31-17-7.1 for use by a sexual partner of a patient clinically diagnosed with chlamydia or

gonorrhea, in which case, the name and address of such sexual partner of the patient;

(E) The time and date of the transmission;

(F) The full name of the person transmitting the order; and

(G) The signature of the practitioner in a manner as defined in regulations promulgated by the board or, in the case of a controlled substances prescription, in accordance with 21 C.F.R. 1301.22;

(3) An electronically transmitted, issued, or produced prescription drug order which meets the requirements of this Code section shall be deemed the original order;

(4) The pharmacist shall exercise professional judgment regarding the accuracy and authenticity of any electronically transmitted, issued, or produced prescription drug order consistent with federal and state laws and rules and regulations adopted pursuant to the same;

(5) An electronically encrypted, issued, or produced prescription drug order transmitted from a practitioner to a pharmacist shall be considered a highly confidential transaction and such transmission, issuance, or production shall not be compromised by unauthorized interventions, control, change, altering, manipulation, or accessing patient record information by any other person or party in any manner whatsoever between the time after the practitioner has electronically transmitted, issued, or produced a prescription drug order and such order has been received by the pharmacy of the patient's choice. For purposes of this paragraph, "unauthorized interventions, control, change, altering, manipulation, or accessing patient record information" shall not include electronic formatting or reconfiguring of data or information for purposes of integrating into and between computer or facsimile systems of practitioners and pharmacists;

(6) Any pharmacist who transmits, receives, or maintains any prescription or prescription refill either orally, in writing, or electronically shall ensure the security, integrity, and confidentiality of the prescription and any information contained therein; and

(7)(A) The board shall promulgate rules and regulations under this Code section for institutional settings such as hospital pharmacies, nursing home pharmacies, clinic pharmacies, or pharmacies owned or operated directly by health maintenance organizations.

(B) The rules established pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall specifically authorize hospital pharmacies to use remote order entry when:

(i) The licensed pharmacist is not physically present in the hospital, the hospital pharmacy is closed, and a licensed phar-

macist will be physically present in the hospital pharmacy within 24 hours or the next business day;

(ii) At least one licensed pharmacist is physically present in the hospital; or

(iii) At least one licensed pharmacist is physically present in another hospital within this state which remotely serves only on weekends not more than four other hospitals under the same ownership or management which have an average daily census of less than 12 acute patients.

(C) Before a hospital may engage in remote order entry as provided in this paragraph, the director of pharmacy of the hospital shall submit to the board written policies and procedures for the use of remote order entry. The required policies and procedures to be submitted to the board shall be in accordance with the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists and shall contain provisions addressing quality assurance and safety, mechanisms to clarify medication orders, processes for reporting medication errors, documentation and record keeping, secure electronic access to the hospital pharmacy's patient information system and to other electronic systems that the on-site pharmacist has access to, access to hospital policies and procedures, confidentiality and security, and mechanisms for real-time communication with prescribers, nurses, and other caregivers responsible for the patient's health care.

(D) If the board concludes that the hospital's actual use of remote order entry does not comply with this paragraph or the rules adopted pursuant to this chapter, it may issue a cease and desist order after notice and hearing.

(d) Information contained in the patient medication record or profile shall be considered confidential information as defined in this title. Confidential information may be released to the patient or the patient's authorized representative, the prescriber or other licensed health care practitioners then caring for the patient, another licensed pharmacist, the board or its representative, or any other person duly authorized to receive such information. In accordance with Code Section 24-12-1, confidential information may be released to others only on the written release of the patient, court order, or subpoena.

(e) Except as authorized under subsection (j) of this Code section, a prescription may not be refilled without authorization. When refills are dispensed pursuant to authorization contained on the original prescription or when no refills are authorized on the original prescription but refills are subsequently authorized by the practitioner, the refill authorization shall be recorded on the original prescription document and the

record of any refill made shall be maintained on the back of the original prescription document or on some other uniformly maintained record and the dispensing pharmacist shall record the date of the refill, the quantity of the drug dispensed, and the dispensing pharmacist's initials; provided, however, that an original prescription for a Schedule III, IV, or V controlled substance which contains no refill information may not be authorized to be refilled more than five times or after six months from the date of issuance, whichever occurs first. Authorization for any additional refill of a Schedule III, IV, or V controlled substance prescription in excess of five refills or after six months from the date of issuance of the prescription shall be treated as a new prescription.

(f)(1) When filling a prescription or refilling a prescription which may be refilled, the pharmacist shall exercise professional judgment in the matter. No prescription shall be filled or refilled with greater frequency than the approximate interval of time that the dosage regimen ordered by the practitioner would indicate, unless extenuating circumstances are documented which would justify a shorter interval of time before the filling or refilling of the prescription. Such circumstances may include but are not limited to instances in which, with regard to a particular county or area of this state, the Governor has issued an executive order or proclamation declaring a state of emergency or the National Weather Service has issued a hurricane warning, the pharmacist may dispense up to a 30 day supply in the counties or areas affected by such order, proclamation, or warning, provided that:

(A) The prescription is not for a Schedule II controlled substance as set out in Code Section 16-13-26;

(B) In the pharmacist's professional judgment, the prescription is essential to the maintenance of life or to the continuation of therapy for a chronic condition;

(C) In the pharmacist's professional judgment, the interruption of such therapy might reasonably produce undesirable health consequences or cause physical or mental discomfort;

(D) The dispensing pharmacist creates and signs a written order containing all of the prescription information required by this article and by Chapter 13 of Title 16; and

(E) The dispensing pharmacist notifies the prescriber of the emergency dispensing within 48 hours after such dispensing and each such dispensing thereafter.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, in order to prevent unintended interruptions in drug therapy for topical ophthalmic products:

(A) A pharmacist shall be authorized, without obtaining subsequent authorization from the practitioner or obtaining a new prescription from the practitioner, to permit refills at 70 percent of the predicted days of use; and

(B) At the patient's request, a practitioner shall be permitted to authorize refills earlier than 70 percent of the predicted days of use.

This paragraph shall apply to refills purchased through retail pharmacies and mail order sources.

(g) The pharmacist who fills or refills a prescription shall record the date of dispensing and indicate the identity of the dispensing pharmacist on the prescription document or some other appropriate and uniformly maintained record. If this record is maintained on the original prescription document, the original dispensing and any refills must be recorded on the back of the prescription.

(h) When the patient no longer seeks personal consultation or treatment from the practitioner, the practitioner and patient relationship is terminated. A prescription becomes invalid after the practitioner and patient relationship is terminated which is defined as a reasonable period of time not to exceed six months in which the patient could have established a new practitioner and patient relationship as established by the board through the promulgation of rules and regulations.

(i) All prescription drug orders must bear the signature of the prescribing practitioner as defined in Code Section 16-13-21. Physician assistants must comply with all applicable laws regarding signatures. Further, the nature of such signature must meet the requirements set forth in regulations promulgated by the board. A physically applied signature stamp is not acceptable in lieu of an original signature. Except as otherwise provided for in this subsection, when an oral prescription drug order or the oral authorization for the refilling of a prescription drug order is received which has been transmitted by someone other than the practitioner, the name of the individual making the transmission and the date, time, and location of the origin of the transmission must be recorded on the original prescription drug order or other record by the pharmacist receiving the transmission. No one other than the practitioner or an agent authorized by the practitioner shall transmit such prescriptions in any manner. In institutional settings such as hospital pharmacies, nursing home pharmacies, clinic pharmacies, or pharmacies owned or operated directly by health maintenance organizations, the name of the individual making the transmission is not required to be placed on the order.

(j) A pharmacist licensed by the board may dispense up to a 72 hour supply of a prescribed medication in the event the pharmacist is unable to contact the practitioner to obtain refill authorization, provided that:

- (1) The prescription is not for a controlled substance;
 - (2) In the pharmacist's professional judgment, the interruption of therapy might reasonably produce undesirable health consequences or may cause physical or mental discomfort;
 - (3) The dispensing pharmacist notifies the practitioner or his or her agent of the dispensing within seven working days after the prescription is refilled pursuant to this subsection;
 - (4) The pharmacist properly records the dispensing as a separate nonrefillable prescription. Said document shall be filed as is required of all other prescription records. This document shall be serially numbered and contain all information required of other prescriptions. In addition it shall contain the number of the prescription from which it was refilled;
 - (5) The pharmacist shall record on the patient's record and on the new document the circumstances which warrant such dispensing; and
 - (6) The pharmacist does not employ this provision regularly for the same patient on the same medication.
- (k) All out-patient prescription drug orders which are dispensed shall be appropriately labeled in accordance with the rules and regulations promulgated by the board as follows:
- (1) Before an out-patient prescription drug is released from the dispensing area, the prescription drug shall bear a label containing the name and address of the pharmacy, a prescription number, the name of the prescriber, the name of the patient, directions for taking the medication, the date of the filling or refilling of the prescription, the initials or identifying code of the dispensing pharmacist, and any other information which is necessary, required, or, in the pharmacist's professional judgment, appropriate; and
 - (2) The pharmacist who fills an out-patient prescription drug order shall indicate the identity of the dispensing pharmacist on the label of the prescription drug. Identification may be made by placing initials on the label of the dispensed drug. The label shall be affixed to the outside of the container of the dispensed drug by means of adhesive or tape or any other means which will assure that the label remains attached to the container.
- (l) A Schedule II controlled substance prescription drug order in written form signed in indelible ink by the practitioner may be accepted by a pharmacist and the Schedule II controlled substance may be dispensed by such pharmacist. Other forms of Schedule II controlled substance prescription drug orders may be accepted by a pharmacist

and the Schedule II controlled substance may be dispensed by such pharmacist in accordance with regulations promulgated by the board and in accordance with DEA regulations found in 21 C.F.R. 1306. A pharmacist shall require a person picking up a Schedule II controlled substance prescription to present a government issued photo identification document or such other form of identification which documents legibly the full name of the person taking possession of the Schedule II controlled substance subject to the rules adopted by the board.

(m) No licensee nor any other entity shall be permitted to provide facsimile machines or equipment, computer software, technology, hardware, or supplies related to the electronic transmission of prescription drug orders to any practitioner which restricts such practitioner from issuing prescription drug orders for certain prescription drugs or restricts a patient from choosing the retail pharmacy to which an electronic prescription drug order may be transmitted.

(n) Institutions including, but not limited to, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and inpatient hospice facilities which utilize electronic medical record systems that meet the information requirements for prescription drug orders for patients pursuant to this Code section shall be considered to be in compliance with this Code section.

(o) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prohibit any insurance company, hospital or medical service plan, health care provider network, health maintenance organization, health care plan, employer, or other similar entity providing health insurance from offering incentives to pharmacies, pharmacists, and practitioners that accept or utilize electronic data prescription drug orders.

(p) Pharmacists dispensing prescriptions pursuant to a remote automated medication system in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Pharmacy pursuant to paragraph (12.1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-28 shall be considered in compliance with this Code section.

(q)(1) A pharmacist may, in the exercise of his or her professional judgment and in consultation with the patient, dispense up to a 90 day supply of maintenance medication for treatment of chronic illnesses up to the total number of dosage units as authorized by the prescriber on the prescription, including any refills, unless:

(A) The prescriber has specified on the prescription that concurrently dispensing initial amounts and refills of such maintenance medication is not allowed; or

(B) It is the initial filling of a prescription for a new maintenance medication or dosage for the patient.

(2) Paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not apply to Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substances.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-80, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, §§ 4, 5; Ga. L. 2006, p. 444, § 2/HB 246; Ga. L. 2009, p. 859, § 3/HB 509; Ga. L. 2011, p. 99, § 39/HB 24; Ga. L. 2011, p. 308, § 7/HB 457; Ga. L. 2011, p. 659, § 4/SB 36; Ga. L. 2012, p. 1092, § 1B/SB 346; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 3/HB 209; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 26/HB 79; Ga. L. 2013, p. 736, § 1/SB 216; Ga. L. 2015, p. 585, § 3/SB 194; Ga. L. 2017, p. 764, § 3-1/SB 193; Ga. L. 2018, p. 132, § 2/HB 769; Ga. L. 2020, p. 802, § 4/SB 391; Ga. L. 2020, p. 805, § 4/HB 791.

Cross references.

Insurer obligations for early prescription refills during emergencies, § 33-24-59.28.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2004, in the first sentence of subsection (c), “pharmacist or pharmacy intern” was substituted for “pharmacist, pharmacy intern,” and “or via an” was substituted for “or an.”

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2013, the amendment of subdivision (c)(7)(B) of this Code section by Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 3/HB 209, was treated as impliedly repealed and superseded by Ga. L. 2013, p. 736, § 1/SB 216, due to irreconcilable conflict. See *County of Butts v. Strahan*, 151 Ga. 417 (1921); *Keener v. McDougall*, 232 Ga. 273 (1974), and Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 54(d)/HB 79.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, § 1, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Patient Safe Prescription Drug Act.’”

Ga. L. 2011, p. 99, § 101/HB 24, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that this Act shall apply to any motion made or hearing or trial commenced on or after January 1, 2013.

Ga. L. 2017, p. 764, § 1-1/SB 193, not codified by the General Assembly, pro-

vides that: “The General Assembly finds that:

“(1) Untreated chlamydial infection has been linked to problems during pregnancy, including preterm labor, premature rupture of membranes, and low birth weight. The newborn may also become infected during delivery as the baby passes through the birth canal. Exposed newborns can develop eye and lung infections; and

“(2) Untreated gonococcal infection in pregnancy has been linked to miscarriages, premature birth and low birth weight, premature rupture of membranes, and chorioamnionitis. Gonorrhea can also infect an infant during delivery as the infant passes through the birth canal. If untreated, infants can develop eye infections.”

Ga. L. 2020, p. 802, § 1/SB 391 and Ga. L. 2020, p. 805, § 1/HB 791, not codified by the General Assembly, provide that: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Early Prescription Refills During Emergencies Act.’”

Ga. L. 2020, p. 802, § 1/SB 391 and Ga. L. 2020, p. 805, § 1/HB 791, not codified by the General Assembly, provide that: “The General Assembly finds that:

“(1) Prescription drug medications may be essential to the maintenance of life or the continuation of therapy for a Georgian with a chronic health condition;

“(2) During times of natural disaster, many Georgians experience significant delays obtaining necessary prescription medication refills; and

“(3) Delays in obtaining such medication may result in serious, undesirable health consequences.”

Law reviews.

For article, “Evidence,” see 27 Ga. St. U. L. Rev. 1 (2011).

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 1 (2011).

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 269 (2011).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Class action. — Trial court erred in finding that a customer and the proposed

class shared common questions of law and fact and that the customer was a suffi-

ciently typical representative of that class under O.C.G.A. § 9-11-23(a)(2) and (a)(3) because the customer did not suffer any actual financial or physical injury as a result of a pharmacy's sale of the customer's medication information to another pharmacy; there was no evidence of any "public" disclosure of the customer's data,

and such cases were bound to turn on individual rather than common questions. *Rite Aid of Ga., Inc. v. Peacock*, 315 Ga. App. 573, 726 S.E.2d 577, 2012 Ga. App. LEXIS 319 (2012), cert. denied, No. S12C1415, 2012 Ga. LEXIS 908 (Ga. Oct. 29, 2012).

RESEARCH REFERENCES

ALR.

Civil liability of pharmacist or druggists for failure to warn of potential drug inter-

actions in use of prescription drug, 79 A.L.R.5th 409.

26-4-80.1. Use of security paper for hard copy prescription drug orders for Schedule II controlled substances.

(a) Effective October 1, 2011, every hard copy prescription drug order for any Schedule II controlled substance written in this state by a practitioner shall be written on security paper.

(b) A pharmacist shall not fill a hard copy prescription drug order for any Schedule II controlled substance from a practitioner unless it is written on security paper, except that a pharmacist may provide emergency supplies in accordance with the board and other insurance contract requirements.

(c) If a hard copy of an electronic data prescription drug order for any Schedule II controlled substance is given directly to the patient, the manually signed hard copy prescription drug order must be on security paper approved by the board that meets the requirements of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (38.5) of Code Section 26-4-5 or security paper that meets the requirements of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (38.5) of Code Section 26-4-5.

(d) Practitioners shall employ reasonable safeguards to assure against theft or unauthorized use of security paper and shall promptly report to appropriate authorities any theft or unauthorized use.

(e) The board shall create a seal of approval that confirms that security paper contains all three industry recognized characteristics required by paragraph (38.5) of Code Section 26-4-5. The seal shall be affixed to all security paper used in this state; provided, however, that security paper which meets the requirements of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (38.5) of Code Section 26-4-5 shall not be required to have such affixed seal.

(f) The board may adopt rules necessary for the administration of this Code section.

(g) The security paper requirements in this Code section shall not apply to:

(1) Prescriptions that are transmitted to the pharmacy by telephone, facsimile, or electronic means; or

(2) Prescriptions written for inpatients of a hospital, outpatients of a hospital, residents of a nursing home, inpatients or residents of a mental health facility, or individuals incarcerated in a local, state, or federal correctional facility when the health care practitioner authorized to write prescriptions writes the order into the patient's medical or clinical record, the order is given directly to the pharmacy, and the patient never has the opportunity to handle the written order.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-80.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2011, p. 659, § 5/SB 36; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 4/HB 209.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 enactment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 269 (2011).

26-4-81. Substitution of generic drugs or interchangeable biological products for brand name drugs and prescribed biological products.

(a) In accordance with this Code section, a pharmacist may substitute:

(1) A drug with the same generic name in the same strength, quantity, dose, and dosage form as the prescribed brand name drug product which is, in the pharmacist's reasonable professional opinion, pharmaceutically equivalent; or

(2) A biological product with an interchangeable biological product.

(b) If a practitioner of the healing arts prescribes:

(1) A drug by its generic name, the pharmacist shall dispense the lowest retail priced drug product which is in stock and which is, in the pharmacist's reasonable professional opinion, pharmaceutically equivalent; or

(2) A biological product by its nonproprietary name, the pharmacist shall dispense the lowest retail priced interchangeable biological product which is in stock.

(c) Substitutions as provided for in subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section are authorized for the express purpose of making available to the consumer the lowest retail priced:

(1) Drug product which is in stock and which is, in the pharma-

cist's reasonable professional opinion, both therapeutically equivalent and pharmaceutically equivalent; or

(2) Interchangeable biological product which is in stock.

(d)(1) Whenever a substitution is made, the pharmacist shall record on the original prescription the fact that there has been a substitution and the identity of the dispensed drug product or interchangeable biological product and its manufacturer. Such prescription shall be made available for inspection by the board or its representative in accordance with the rules of the board.

(2) If a pharmacist substitutes a generic drug product for a brand name prescribed drug product when dispensing a prescribed medication, the brand name and the generic name of the drug product, with an explanation of "generic for (insert name of brand name prescribed drug product)" or similar language to indicate substitution has occurred, must appear on the prescription label and be affixed to the container or an auxiliary label, unless the prescribing practitioner indicated that the name of the drug may not appear upon the prescription label; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to medication dispensed for in-patient hospital services or to medications in specialty packaging for dosing purposes as defined by the board.

(3) If a pharmacist substitutes an interchangeable biological product for a prescribed biological product when dispensing a prescribed medication, the name of the interchangeable biological product, with an explanation of "interchangeable biological product for (insert name of prescribed biological product)" or similar language to indicate substitution has occurred, must appear on the prescription label and be affixed to the container or an auxiliary label, unless the prescribing practitioner indicated that the name of the biological product may not appear upon the prescription label; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to biological products dispensed for in-patient hospital services, to hospital administered biological products for outpatients, or to biological products in specialty packaging for dosing purposes as defined by the board. This paragraph shall apply to hospital retail pharmacies and to any biological products dispensed by a hospital for a patient's use or administration at home.

(e) The substitution of any drug or biological product by a registered pharmacist pursuant to this Code section does not constitute the practice of medicine.

(f) A patient for whom a prescription drug or biological product order is intended may instruct a pharmacist not to substitute a generic name drug in lieu of a brand name drug or an interchangeable biological product in lieu of a prescribed biological product.

(g) A practitioner of the healing arts may instruct the pharmacist not to substitute a generic name drug in lieu of a brand name drug or an interchangeable biological product in lieu of a prescribed biological product by including the words “brand necessary” in the body of the prescription. When a prescription is a hard copy prescription drug or biological product order, such indication of brand necessary must be in the practitioner’s own handwriting and shall not be printed, applied by rubber stamp, or any such similar means. When the prescription is an electronic prescription drug or biological product order, the words “brand necessary” are not required to be in the practitioner’s own handwriting and may be included on the prescription in any manner or by any method. When a practitioner has designated “brand necessary” on an electronic prescription drug or biological product order, a generic drug or interchangeable biological product shall not be substituted without the practitioner’s express consent, which shall be documented by the pharmacist on the prescription and by the practitioner in the patient’s medical record.

(h) Within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, following the dispensing of a biological product, the dispensing pharmacist or the pharmacist’s designee shall communicate to the prescriber the specific product provided to the patient, including the name of the biological product and the manufacturer. The communication shall be conveyed by making an entry into an interoperable electronic medical records system or through electronic prescribing technology or a pharmacy record that is electronically accessible by the prescriber. Otherwise, the pharmacist shall communicate the biological product dispensed to the prescriber by using facsimile, telephone, electronic transmission, or other prevailing means, provided that communication shall not be required where:

(1) There is no interchangeable biological product approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration for the prescribed product; or

(2) A refill prescription is not changed from the product dispensed on the prior filling of the prescription.

(i) The board shall maintain a link on its website to the current list of all biological products determined by the federal Food and Drug Administration to be interchangeable with a specific biological product.

(j) Code Section 26-4-118, “The Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights,” shall apply to biological products and interchangeable biological products dispensed pursuant to this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-81, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, § 6; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 26/SB 46; Ga. L. 2010, p. 266, § 5/SB 195; Ga. L. 2010, p. 554, § 1/HB 194; Ga. L. 2015, p. 1209, § 2/SB 51.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2004, p. 738, § 1, not codified by the General Assembly, provides that: “This Act shall be known and may be cited as the ‘Patient Safe Prescription Drug Act.’”

RESEARCH REFERENCES**ALR.**

Liability of name brand drug manufacturer for injury or death resulting from

use of prescription drug's generic equivalent, 56 A.L.R.6th 161.

26-4-82. Duties requiring professional judgment; responsibilities of licensed pharmacist.

(a) In dispensing drugs, no individual other than a licensed pharmacist shall perform or conduct those duties or functions which require professional judgment. It shall be the responsibility of the supervising pharmacist to ensure that no other employee of the pharmacy, including pharmacy technicians, performs or conducts those duties or functions which require professional judgment.

(b) For all prescriptions, it shall be the responsibility of the pharmacist on duty at a facility to ensure that only a pharmacist or a pharmacy intern under the direct supervision of a pharmacist provides professional consultation and counseling with patients or other licensed health care professionals, and that only a pharmacist or a pharmacy intern under the direct supervision of a pharmacist accepts initial telephoned prescription orders or provides information in any manner relative to prescriptions or prescription drugs.

(c) In the dispensing of all prescription drug orders:

(1) The pharmacist shall be responsible for all activities of the pharmacy technician in the preparation of the drug for delivery to the patient;

(2) The pharmacist shall be present and personally supervising the activities of the pharmacy technician at all times;

(3) When electronic systems are employed within the pharmacy, pharmacy technicians may enter information into the system and prepare labels; provided, however, that it shall be the responsibility of the pharmacist to verify the accuracy of the information entered and the label produced in conjunction with the prescription drug order;

(4) When a prescription drug order is presented for refilling, it shall be the responsibility of the pharmacist to review all appropriate information and make the determination as to whether to refill the prescription drug order; and

(5) Pharmacy technicians in the dispensing area shall be easily identifiable.

(d) The board of pharmacy shall promulgate rules and regulations regarding the activities and utilization of pharmacy technicians in pharmacies, including the establishment of a registry as required in paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-28; provided, however, that the pharmacist to pharmacy technician ratio shall not exceed one pharmacist providing direct supervision of four pharmacy technicians. The board may consider and approve an application to increase the ratio in a pharmacy located in a licensed hospital. Such application must be made in writing and must be submitted to the board by the pharmacist in charge of a specific hospital pharmacy in this state. At any time during which the pharmacist directly supervises four pharmacy technicians, two of such technicians must be certified. At any time during which the pharmacist directly supervises three pharmacy technicians, one of such technicians must be certified. No certification is required for pharmacy technicians in pharmacies at any time during which the pharmacist directly supervises one or two pharmacy technicians. In order to be certified, pharmacy technicians must:

(1) Have successfully passed a certification program approved by the board of pharmacy;

(2) Have successfully passed an employer's training and assessment program which has been approved by the board of pharmacy; or

(3) Have been certified by either the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board or any other nationally recognized certifying body approved by the board of pharmacy.

(e) In addition to the utilization of pharmacy technicians, a pharmacist may be assisted by and directly supervise one pharmacy intern and one pharmacy extern.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-82, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 1492, § 1; Ga. L. 2007, p. 229, § 2/HB 330; Ga. L. 2021, p. 83, § 1/HB 316.

The 2021 amendment, effective July 1, 2021, in subsection (d), substituted "four" for "three" near the end of the proviso of the first sentence, substituted "At any time during which the pharmacist directly supervises four pharmacy technicians, two of such technicians must be certified." for "One of the three" in the

fourth sentence, added the fifth and sixth sentences, and added "In order to be certified, pharmacy" at the beginning of the last sentence.

Editor's notes.

For application of this statute in 2020 and 2021, see Executive Orders 03.31.20.04, 01.15.21.01, 01.29.21.02, 02.15.21.01, 02.26.21.02, 03.12.21.01, 03.31.21.03, 04.30.21.01, 05.28.21.02, 06.30.21.02, 07.22.21.02, 08.19.21.02, and 09.20.21.02.

26-4-83. Patient record systems.

(a) The board of pharmacy may refuse to renew or may suspend, revoke, or restrict the licenses of or fine any person or pharmacy pursuant to the procedures set forth in this Code section and rules and regulations established by the board upon the failure to maintain an appropriate patient record system.

(b) A patient record system shall be maintained by all pharmacies for patients for whom prescription drug orders are dispensed. The patient record system shall provide for the immediate retrieval of information necessary by the pharmacist to identify previously dispensed drugs at the time a prescription drug order is presented for dispensing. The pharmacist or the pharmacist's designee shall make a reasonable effort to obtain, record, and maintain the following information:

- (1) The full name of the patient for whom the drug is intended;
- (2) The address and telephone number of the patient;
- (3) The date of birth of the patient; and
- (4) The gender of the patient.

(c) The pharmacist shall make a reasonable effort to obtain from the patient or the patient's agent and shall record any known allergies, drug reactions, idiosyncrasies, and chronic conditions or disease states of the patient and identify any other drugs, including over-the-counter drugs or devices, currently being used by the patient which may relate to prospective drug use review unless the patient or the patient's agent refuses to provide such information. The pharmacist shall make a reasonable effort to obtain, record, and maintain the following information:

- (1) A list of all prescription drug orders obtained by the patient at the pharmacy where the prescription drug order is being filled for at least the preceding two years, showing the prescription number, the name and strength of the drug, the quantity and date dispensed, and the name of the prescribing practitioner; and

- (2) Comments from the pharmacist relevant to the individual's drug therapy, including any other information peculiar to the specific patient or drug.

(d) A patient record shall be maintained for a period of not less than two years from the date of the last entry in the profile record. This record may be a hard copy of a computerized form.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-83, enacted by Ga. L.
1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-84. Restriction of license for failure to review patient records and prescription drug orders.

(a) The board of pharmacy may refuse to renew or may suspend, revoke, or restrict the licenses of or fine any person or pharmacy pursuant to the procedures set forth in this Code section upon the failure to review patient records and prescription drug orders.

(b) A pharmacist shall review the patient record and each prescription drug order presented for dispensing for the purposes of promoting therapeutic appropriateness by identifying:

- (1) Overutilization or underutilization;
- (2) Therapeutic duplications;
- (3) Drug-disease contraindications;
- (4) Drug-drug interactions;
- (5) Incorrect drug dosage, dosage form, or duration of drug therapy;
- (6) Drug-allergy interactions; and
- (7) Clinical abuse or misuse.

(c) Upon recognizing any of the above situations, the pharmacist shall take appropriate steps to avoid or resolve the situation or problem which shall, if necessary, include consultation with the prescribing practitioner.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-84, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-85. Patient counseling; optimizing drug therapy.

(a) The board of pharmacy may refuse to renew or may suspend, revoke, or restrict the licenses of or fine any person or pharmacy pursuant to the procedures set forth in this Code section upon the failure to offer to counsel patients.

(b) Upon receipt of a prescription drug order and following a review of the patient's record, the pharmacist or the pharmacy intern operating under the direct supervision of the pharmacist shall personally offer to discuss matters which will enhance or optimize drug therapy with each patient or caregiver of such a patient. Such discussion shall be in person, whenever practicable, or by telephone and shall include appropriate elements of patient counseling, based on the professional judgment of the pharmacist. Such elements may include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) The name and description of the drug;
 - (2) The dosage form, dose, route of administration and duration of therapy;
 - (3) The intended use of the drug and expected action or result;
 - (4) Any special directions or precautions for preparation, administration, or use by the patient;
 - (5) Common severe side effects or adverse effects or interactions and therapeutic contraindications that may be encountered, including their avoidance, and the action required if such side effect, adverse effect, interaction, or therapeutic contraindication occurs;
 - (6) Techniques for self-monitoring of drug therapy;
 - (7) The proper storage of the drug;
 - (8) Prescription refill information;
 - (9) The action to be taken in the event of a missed dose; and
 - (10) The comments of the pharmacist relevant to the patient's drug therapy, including any other information peculiar to the specific patient or drug.
- (c) Additional forms of patient information may be used to supplement verbal patient counseling when appropriate or available.
- (d) Patient counseling, as described in this Code section, shall not be required for:
- (1) In-patients of a hospital or institution where other health care professionals are authorized to administer the drug or drugs;
 - (2) Inmates of corrections institutions where pharmacy services are provided by the Department of Corrections or by a county or municipal political subdivision either directly or by a subcontractor of the above; or
 - (3) Patients receiving drugs from the Department of Public Health; provided, however, that pharmacists who provide drugs to patients in accordance with Code Section 43-34-23 shall include in all dispensing procedures a written process whereby the patient or the caregiver of the patient is provided with the information required under this Code section.
- (e) A pharmacist shall not be required to counsel a patient or the caregiver of the patient when the patient or the caregiver of the patient refuses such consultation or counseling.

History.

1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2007, p. 229,
Code 1981, § 26-4-85, enacted by Ga. L. § 3/HB 330; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB

228; Ga. L. 2009, p. 859, § 7/HB 509; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 5-7/HB 214.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 1998, a comma was inserted following “administration” in paragraph (b)(4) and

“taken” was substituted for “take” in paragraph (b)(9).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

26-4-86. Compounding and distribution of drug products.

(a) The board shall establish rules and regulations governing the compounding and distribution of drug products by pharmacists, practitioners, and pharmacies licensed or registered by this state. Such rules and regulations shall include provisions ensuring compliance with USP-NF standards.

(b)(1) All drug products compounded and labeled in accordance with board rules regarding pharmaceutical compounding shall be deemed to meet the labeling requirements of Chapter 13 of Title 16 and Chapters 3 and 4 of this title.

(2) All drug products compounded by a licensed outsourcing facility shall also be compounded in accordance with applicable current good manufacturing practices established by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

(c) In regards to pharmacists compounding nonpatient-specific sterile drugs to be provided to practitioners to use in patient care or altering or repackaging such drugs for practitioners to use in patient care in the practitioner’s office, such nonpatient-specific sterile compounding shall only be conducted by an outsourcing facility and as allowed by applicable federal law and board rule for pharmaceutical compounding using USP-NF standards for sterile compounding. Such sterile drugs may be compounded only in quantities determined by board rule following consultation with the Georgia Composite Medical Board. No Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substance, as defined in Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16, shall be eligible for such designation. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to apply to pharmacies owned or operated by institutions or to pharmacists or practitioners within or employed by an institution or affiliated entity; provided, however, that pharmacies owned or operated by institutions and pharmacists and practitioners within or employed by institutions or affiliated entities shall remain subject to other requirements, rules, and regulations established by the board and the federal Food and Drug Administration governing the compounding of medication.

(d)(1) Practitioners who may lawfully compound drugs for administering or dispensing to their own patients pursuant to Code Section 26-4-130 shall comply with all provisions of this Code section and board rules regarding pharmaceutical compounding.

(2) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to prohibit or interfere with the ability of a practitioner to compound drugs for administering or dispensing to their own patients pursuant to Code Section 26-4-130.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-86, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 5/HB 209; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 4/HB 926; Ga. L. 2017, p. 774, § 26/HB 323.

Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-11-.01 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Pharmaceutical Compounding, Official

26-4-87. Storage and handling of controlled substances and dangerous drugs.

The board shall promulgate rules and regulations governing the appropriate and proper storage and handling of controlled substances and dangerous drugs as defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16 which are consistent with those standards established by the United States Pharmacopeial Convention.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-87, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-88. Restrictions on dispensing of medicines, drugs, or poisons; functions which require the professional judgment of a pharmacist.

(a) No person shall engage in the dispensing of any medicines, drugs, or poisons unless said person is a pharmacist licensed in accordance with this chapter or a pharmacy intern dispensing such items in accordance with this chapter.

(b) Except as otherwise required pursuant to Code Section 26-4-86, this chapter shall not apply to practitioners of the healing arts prescribing, compounding their own prescriptions, or dispensing drugs or medicines except as provided in Code Section 26-4-130.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall prohibit any person from assisting any duly licensed pharmacist or practitioner, provided that such duly licensed pharmacist or practitioner shall be physically present in the prescription area and actually observing the actions of such person performing such tasks; provided, further, that no prescription shall be given to the person requesting the same unless the contents and the label thereof shall have been verified by a licensed pharmacist or practitioner.

(d) With respect to pharmacy technicians, the following functions

require the professional judgment of a pharmacist, or pharmacy intern under the supervision of a pharmacist, and may not be performed by a pharmacy technician:

- (1) Acceptance of initial oral prescriptions;
- (2) Certification of a filled or finished prescription or prescription drug order;
- (3) Weighing or measuring active ingredients without a mechanism of verification;
- (4) Reconstitution of prefabricated medication without a mechanism of verification;
- (5) Verification of the constituents of final IV admixtures for accuracy, efficacy, and patient utilization;
- (6) Entry of orders on patient medication profiles without verification by a pharmacist; and
- (7) Provision of drug information that has not been prepared or approved by the pharmacist.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127,
Code 1981, § 26-4-88, enacted by Ga. L. § 6/HB 209.

26-4-89. Selling drugs in vending machines prohibited; remote automated medication system excluded.

(a) Any person who shall sell or dispense drugs by the use of vending machines shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) A remote automated medication system shall not be considered a vending machine for purposes of this Code section.

History. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26;
Code 1981, § 26-4-89, enacted by Ga. L. Ga. L. 2011, p. 308, § 8/HB 457.

26-4-90. Remuneration for professional pharmacy care services.

Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted to prohibit a pharmacist or pharmacy from being remunerated for professional pharmacy care services.

History.
Code 1981, § 26-4-90, enacted by Ga. L.
1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 6

PHARMACIES

Administrative rules and regulations.

Pharmacy Licenses, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-6-.01 et seq.

Hospital Pharmacy Regulations, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-13-.01 et seq.

Nursing Homes, Long Term Care Facilities and Hospice Emergency Drug Kits, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-24-.01 et seq.

Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-24-.01 et seq.

Retail Pharmacy Requirement for Remote Prescription Drug Ordering Processing, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-36-.01 et seq.

Remote Automated Medication Systems, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Georgia State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-37-.01 et seq.

26-4-110. Pharmacy licenses; applications; fees; investigations; prescription department requirements.

(a) All facilities engaged in the manufacture, production, sale, or distribution of drugs or devices utilized in the practice of pharmacy or pharmacies where drugs or devices are dispensed or pharmacy care is provided shall be licensed by the board and shall biennially renew their license with the board. Where operations are conducted at more than one location, each such location shall be licensed by the board.

(b) The board may by rule determine the licensure classifications of all persons and facilities licensed as a pharmacy under this article and establish minimum standards for such persons and facilities.

(c)(1) The board shall establish by rule, under the powers granted to it under Article 2 of this chapter and as may be required from time to time under federal law the criteria which each person must meet to qualify for licensure as a pharmacy in each classification. The board may issue licenses with varying restrictions to such persons where the board deems it necessary.

(2) All applications for a new license shall be accompanied by a fee. Upon the filing of an application for a license, the board may cause a thorough investigation of the applicant to be made, and, if satisfied that the applicant possesses the necessary qualifications and that the pharmacy will be conducted in accordance with law, shall issue a license.

(d) Each pharmacy shall have a pharmacist in charge. Whenever an applicable rule requires or prohibits action by a pharmacy, responsibility shall be that of the owner and the pharmacist in charge of the pharmacy, whether the owner is a sole proprietor, partnership, associa-

tion, corporation, or otherwise. The pharmacist in charge shall be responsible for notifying the board in accordance with its rules and regulations of updated information regarding the registration of pharmacy technicians.

(e) The board may enter into agreements with other states or with third parties for the purpose of exchanging information concerning licensure of any pharmacy.

(f) The board may deny or refuse to renew a pharmacy license if it determines that the granting or renewing of such license would not be in the public interest.

(g) It shall be unlawful for any person in connection with any place of business or in any manner to take, use, or exhibit the title “drug store,” “pharmacy,” “apothecary,” or any combination of such titles or any title or designation of like import or other term to take the place of such title, unless such place of business is licensed as a pharmacy under the provisions of this chapter, has submitted a written request to the board and received a waiver from this subsection, or meets the provisions of any rule or regulation regarding use of such titles and promulgated by the board.

(h) Every pharmacy licensed under this chapter shall have a prescription department which shall be kept clean and free of all materials not currently in use in the practice of compounding or preparing a medication for dispensing. The space behind the prescription counter shall be kept free of obstruction at all times.

(i) During hours of operation, every pharmacy licensed pursuant to this chapter shall have a prescription department under the personal supervision of a duly licensed pharmacist who shall have personal supervision of not more than one pharmacy at the same time, provided that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any pharmacist from having personal supervision of a pharmacy located in a hospital, nursing home, college of pharmacy, or a pharmacy owned and operated directly by a health maintenance organization. Every pharmacy licensed under this chapter, except those located within and owned and operated by a duly licensed and accredited hospital, nursing home, or college of pharmacy or a pharmacy complying with subsection (j) of this Code section, shall have a prescription department open for business at all times that the business establishment is open to the public, except that during temporary absences of any licensed pharmacist not to exceed three hours daily or more than one and one-half hours at any one time the prescription department shall be closed and no prescription shall be filled or dispensed.

(j) If a pharmacy is located in a general merchandising establishment, or if the owner of the pharmacy so chooses, a portion of the space

of the business establishment may be set aside and permanently enclosed or otherwise secured. Only that permanently enclosed or otherwise secured area shall be subject to the provisions of this chapter and shall be registered as a pharmacy. In such case, the area to be registered as a pharmacy shall be permanently enclosed with a partition built from the floor to the ceiling or otherwise secured in a manner as provided by the board through rules and regulations.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-110, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81,

§ 26; Ga. L. 1999, p. 757, § 1; Ga. L. 2007,
p. 229, § 4/HB 330.

26-4-111. Licensure procedures for pharmacies; non-transferability; minimum standards.

(a) The board shall specify by rule the pharmacy licensure procedures to be followed, including but not limited to specification of forms for use in applying for such licensure and times, places, and applicable fees.

(b) Applicants for licensure to distribute, manufacture, sell, purchase, or produce drugs or devices within this state shall file with the board a verified application containing such information as the board requires of the applicant relative to the qualifications for a license.

(c) Pharmacy licenses issued by the board pursuant to this chapter shall not be transferable or assignable.

(d) The board shall specify by rule minimum standards for responsibility of any person or pharmacy that has employees or personnel engaged in the practice of pharmacy, manufacture, distribution, production, sale, or use of drugs or devices in the conduct of their business. If the licensed person is a pharmacy located in this state, that portion of the facility to which such license applies shall be operated only under the direct supervision of a pharmacist licensed to practice in this state.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-111, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice Forms. Forms, Drugs, Narcotics, and Poisons,
§ 2.
8C Am. Jur. Pleading and Practice

26-4-112. Occurrences requiring immediate notification to board.

The board shall be notified immediately upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- (1) Permanent closing of a licensed pharmacy;
- (2) Change of ownership, management, or location of a licensed pharmacy;
- (3) Change of the pharmacist in charge of a licensed pharmacy. If upon the board being notified of such change a replacement pharmacist in charge is not named in said notification, the license of that pharmacy shall stand suspended pending further findings by the board;
- (4) Any theft or loss of drugs or devices of a licensed pharmacy;
- (5) Any known conviction of any employee of a licensed pharmacy of any state or federal drug laws;
- (6) Disasters, accidents, theft, destruction, or loss of records of a licensed pharmacy required to be maintained by state or federal law;
- (7) Occurrence at a licensed pharmacy of a significant adverse drug reaction as defined by rules of the board; or
- (8) Any and all other matters and occurrences at a licensed pharmacy as the board may require by rule.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-112, enacted by Ga.

L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 7/HB 209.

26-4-113. Wholesale distributors; licensing requirements; suspension or revocation of license; reinstatement.

(a) No person shall operate as a pharmacy until a pharmacy license has been issued to such person by the board.

(b) Except where otherwise permitted by law, it shall be unlawful for any type of manufacturer, wholesale distributor, reverse drug distributor, outsourcing facility, or third-party logistics provider to distribute or deliver drugs or devices to or receive drugs or devices from any person or firm in this state not licensed under this chapter; provided, however, that out-of-state firms that conduct intracompany transfers of drugs or devices to and have the same ownership as a licensed firm in this state shall not be required to be licensed in this state pursuant to this chapter; and provided, further, that out-of-state third-party logistics providers that are licensed by their resident state or by the federal Food and Drug Administration shall not be required to obtain a license pursuant to this chapter. Any person who distributes or delivers drugs

or devices to or receives drugs or devices from a person or firm not licensed under this chapter shall be subject to a fine to be imposed by the board for each offense in addition to such other disciplinary action the board may take under this chapter. Each such violation shall also constitute a misdemeanor.

(c) The board may suspend, revoke, deny, or refuse to renew the pharmacy license of, reprimand, issue a letter of concern to, or fine any person licensed under this article on any of the following grounds:

(1) The finding by the board of violations of any federal or state laws relating to the practice of pharmacy, drug samples, wholesale or retail drug or device distribution, or distribution of controlled substances;

(2) Any felony convictions under federal or state laws;

(3) The furnishing of false or fraudulent material in any application made in connection with drug or device manufacturing or distribution;

(4) Suspension or revocation by the federal or state government of any license currently or previously held by the applicant for the manufacture or distribution of any drugs or devices including controlled substances;

(5) Obtaining any remuneration by fraud, misrepresentation, or deception;

(6) Dealing with drugs or devices that are known or should have been known to be stolen drugs or devices;

(7) Purchasing or receiving of a drug or device from a source other than a person or pharmacy licensed under the laws of the state except where otherwise provided;

(8) Wholesale drug distributors, other than pharmacies, dispensing or distributing drugs or devices directly to patients; or

(9) Violations of any of the provisions of this chapter or of any of the rules adopted by the board under this chapter.

(d) Reinstatement of a pharmacy license that has been suspended, revoked, or restricted by the board may be granted in accordance with the rules of the board.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-113, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 5/HB 926.

26-4-114. Special pharmacy permits.

(a) A pharmacy located within and owned and operated by a school or

college of pharmacy in this state may apply to the board for a special pharmacy permit which shall entitle the holder thereof to purchase, receive, possess, or dispose of drugs for educational or research purposes. The application shall include the name of a registered pharmacist who shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records regarding the purchase, receipt, possession, and disposal of drugs utilized for educational or research purposes. If the board certifies that the application complies with applicable laws and rules and regulations, the board shall issue the permit.

(b) A holder of a special pharmacy permit under subsection (a) of this Code section shall not engage in the sale or dispensing of drugs.

(c) The board shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the holder of a special pharmacy permit under this Code section and may exempt the holder thereof from requirements otherwise applicable to other pharmacies.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-114, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-114.1. Nonresident pharmacy permits; application; requirements.

(a) Any person, pharmacy, or facility located outside this state may apply to the board for a nonresident pharmacy permit which shall entitle the holder thereof to ship, mail, or deliver dispensed drugs, including but not limited to dangerous drugs and controlled substances, into this state. The board shall establish an application and require such information as the board deems reasonably necessary to carry out a background investigation of applicants and to ensure that the purposes of this Code section are met. Such application shall include:

(1) Proof of a valid, unexpired license, permit, or registration to operate a pharmacy in compliance with the laws and rules of each state in which the applicant receives and dispenses prescription drug orders, including but not limited to orders for prescription drugs, dangerous drugs, and controlled substances;

(2) Addresses, names, and titles of all principal corporate officers and the pharmacist in charge of dispensing drugs to residents of this state; and

(3) A statement of whether the applicant is in compliance with all lawful directions and requests for information from the regulatory or licensing agencies of each state in which the applicant is licensed as well as all requests for information made by the board pursuant to this Code section.

(b) The board shall establish by rule an application fee and the biennial renewal fee for a permit under this Code section.

(c) The board may only deny an application for a nonresident pharmacy permit for failure to comply with rules of the board or any requirements of this Code section or for good cause related to substantial evidence of misfeasance or malfeasance by the applicant. Applicants granted a permit under this Code section shall provide pharmacy care in a manner which does not endanger life and protects the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of this state. A pharmacy, facility, or entity licensed under Title 33 shall not be required to hold a nonresident pharmacy permit.

(d) After an effective date established by rule of the board for the enforcement of the nonresident pharmacy permits, it shall be unlawful for any person, pharmacy, or facility that is located outside this state and that does not possess a nonresident pharmacy permit to ship, mail, or deliver prescription drug orders or to advertise its services in this state, or for any person who is a resident of this state to advertise the services of such person, pharmacy, or facility with the knowledge that the advertisement will or is likely to induce residents of this state to use such person, pharmacy, or facility for pharmacy care. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit or prohibit interstate commerce, including but not limited to the practice of pharmacy by mail.

(e) The board shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the holder of a nonresident pharmacy permit under this Code section. Such rules and regulations shall minimally include the following requirements for nonresident pharmacy permit holders:

(1) A permit holder's pharmacist in charge of dispensing drugs to residents of this state shall be licensed in his or her state of location;

(2) A permit holder shall provide written notification to the board within ten days of any change of a permit holder's principal corporate officers or pharmacist in charge of dispensing drugs to residents of this state;

(3) A permit holder shall file a change of location application upon any change to the permit holder's state of registration in addition to proof of the license, permit, or registration from the permit holder's new state of registration and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration registration for such new location;

(4) A permit holder shall respond within ten calendar days to all communications from the board concerning emergency circumstances arising from errors in the dispensing of any drugs to residents of this state;

(5) A permit holder shall provide written notification to the board of each location at which the permit holder maintains its records for all prescription drug orders dispensed to patients in this state so that the records are readily retrievable from the business records of the permit holder; and

(6) A permit holder shall maintain a toll-free telephone number operational during the permit holder's regular hours of operation but not less than six days per week for a minimum of 60 hours per week that shall be used to provide and facilitate patient counseling. Such toll-free number shall be capable of receiving inbound calls from patients to the permit holder and shall be disclosed on the label affixed to each container of all dispensed and distributed drugs.

(f) The board may revoke, suspend, or refuse to renew a permit of a permit holder for failure to comply with rules of the board or with any requirement of this Code section or for conduct which causes serious bodily or psychological injury to a resident of this state, provided that the board has referred the matter involving the conduct to the regulatory or licensing agency in the state in which the permit holder is located and the regulatory or licensing agency fails to initiate an investigation into the matter within 180 days of such referral or fails, in the board's judgment, to render sufficient resolution.

(g)(1) As a prerequisite to registering or renewing a registration with the board, a nonresident pharmacy conducting sterile or nonsterile compounding for practitioners to use in patient care in the practitioner's office shall submit a copy of the most recent and current inspection report resulting from an inspection conducted by the regulatory or licensing agency of the jurisdiction in which it is located that indicates compliance with the requirements of this chapter, including compliance with USP-NF standards for pharmacies performing sterile and nonsterile compounding. The inspection report required by this subsection shall not be required if the compounding within the facility is done pursuant to a prescription. Such inspection report shall be deemed current for the purpose of this subsection if the inspection was conducted:

(A) No more than six months prior to the date of submission of an application for registration with the board; or

(B) No more than two years prior to the date of submission of an application for renewal of a registration with the board.

(2) If the nonresident pharmacy conducting sterile or nonsterile compounding has not been inspected by the regulatory or licensing agency of the jurisdiction in which it is located within the timeframes required in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the board may:

(A) Accept an inspection report or other documentation from another entity that is satisfactory to the board; or

(B) Make a request of the appropriate regulatory or licensing agency of the jurisdiction where the pharmacy is located to cause an inspection to be conducted by an agent duly authorized by the board.

A nonresident pharmacy shall be responsible for paying any inspection fee incurred pursuant to this paragraph.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-114.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 8/HB 209.

2013, “with” was inserted near the end of the first sentence of paragraph (g)(1).

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-4-115. Wholesale drug distributors; registration; fees; reports of excessive purchases; penalty for violations; transfers of drugs.

(a) All persons, firms, or corporations, whether located in this state or in any other state, engaged in the business of selling or distributing drugs at wholesale in this state, in the business of supplying drugs to manufacturers, compounders, and processors in this state, or in the business of a reverse drug distributor shall biennially register with the board as a drug wholesaler, distributor, reverse drug distributor, supplier, outsourcing facility, or third-party logistics provider; provided, however, that out-of-state firms that conduct intracompany transfers of drugs to and have the same ownership as a licensed firm in this state shall not be required to register pursuant to this subsection; and provided, further, that out-of-state third-party logistics providers that are licensed by their resident state or by the federal Food and Drug Administration shall not be required to register pursuant to this subsection. The application for registration shall be made on a form to be prescribed and furnished by the board and shall show each place of business of the applicant for registration, together with such other information as may be required by the board. The application shall be accompanied by a fee in an amount established by the board for each place of business registered by the applicant. Such registration shall not be transferable and shall expire on the expiration date established by the executive director. Registration shall be renewed pursuant to the rules and regulations of the board, and a renewal fee prescribed by the board shall be required. If not renewed, the registration shall lapse and become null and void. Registrants shall be subject to such rules and regulations with respect to sanitation or equipment as the board may, from time to time, adopt for the protection of the public health and safety. Such registration may be suspended or revoked or the registrant may be reprimanded, fined, or placed on probation by the board if the registrant fails to comply with any law of this state, the United States, or any other state having to do with the control of pharmacists,

pharmacies, wholesale distribution, reverse drug distribution, or outsourcing facility distribution of controlled substances or dangerous drugs as defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16; if the registrant fails to comply with any rule or regulation promulgated by the board; or if any registration or license issued to the registrant under the federal act is suspended or revoked.

(b) Every drug wholesaler, distributor, supplier, or outsourcing facility registered as provided in Chapter 13 of Title 16 or in subsection (a) of this Code section, except reverse drug distributors, shall:

(1) Submit reports, upon request from the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency, to account for all transactions with licensed persons or firms located within this state; such reportable transactions shall include all dangerous drugs and controlled substances as defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16. Such reports shall be submitted to the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency;

(2) Automatically submit reports of any excessive purchases of controlled substances by licensed persons or firms located within this state using the United States Drug Enforcement Administration guidelines to define excessive purchases as set forth under the provisions of 21 C.F.R. Section 1301. Such reports shall be submitted to the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency; and

(3)(A) Comply with the requirements of Section 360eee, et seq., of the federal act, relating to drug supply chain security.

(B) Each manufacturer of a drug subject to Section 360eee, et seq., of the federal act shall maintain at its corporate offices a current list of the authorized wholesale distributors of such drug.

(C) The board shall establish rules and regulations relating to drug supply chain security based on the requirements of Section 360eee, et seq., of the federal act which are not inconsistent with, more stringent than, or in addition to any requirements applicable under Section 353(e) or Section 360eee of the federal act or any regulations issued thereunder and which are not inconsistent with any waiver, exception, or exemption pursuant to Section 360eee, et seq., of the federal act or any restrictions specified in Section 360eee-1 of the federal act.

(c) The board shall be authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to facilitate compliance with this Code section. Such rules and regulations shall include a requirement that all wholesale drug distributors required to register pursuant to this Code section shall make adequate provision for the return of outdated drugs, both full and partial containers, for up to six months after the labeled expiration date for prompt full credit or replacement; provided, however, that such

rules and regulations may also include a list of drugs exempted from the requirements of such provision that have been determined by the board as essential to health care treatment and having an expiration date of less than one year from the date such drug is manufactured.

(d) The provisions of subsection (b) of this Code section shall not apply to any wholesaler, manufacturer, distributor, or supplier that only ships controlled substances directly to a licensed wholesaler within this state.

(e) Any person, firm, or corporation which violates any provision of this Code section shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than five years or by a fine not to exceed \$25,000.00, or both.

(f) Any practitioner who knowingly transfers any controlled substance or dangerous drug as such terms are defined in Chapter 13 of Title 16 by purchasing from or returning to a person, firm, or corporation which is not registered as required in subsection (a) of this Code section or as required in Chapter 13 of Title 16 shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than three years or by a fine not to exceed \$10,000.00, or both.

(g) Transfers of drugs from a licensed hospital pharmacy to an entity that is affiliated with or owned by the hospital shall not be deemed wholesale distributors of drugs.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-115, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 19; Ga. L. 2002, p. 1492, § 3; Ga. L. 2013, p. 192, § 1-17/HB 132; Ga. L. 2016, p. 855, § 6/HB 926; Ga. L. 2017, p. 417, § 8-1/SB 104; Ga. L. 2023, p. 730, § 4(b)(17)/HB 475, effective July 1, 2023.

The 2023 amendment, effective July 1, 2023, part of an Act to revise, modernize, and correct the Code, substituted

“United States Drug Enforcement Administration” for “federal Drug Enforcement Administration” in the first sentence of paragraph (b)(2).

Law reviews.

For article on the 2017 amendment of this Code section, see 34 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 61 (2017).

For annual survey on criminal law, see 69 Mercer L. Rev. 73 (2017).

26-4-115.1. Requirement that certain wholesale distributors of controlled substances and dangerous drugs provide price and quantity information.

Every wholesale distributor registered as provided in Chapter 13 of Title 16 or subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-115, except those which are exclusively reverse drug distributors, shall provide to the Department of Community Health such information, with regard to the controlled substances and dangerous drugs which are distributed by that wholesale distributor, as is determined by that department to be necessary or useful in the department’s efficient administration of the

state plan for medical assistance, as defined in Code Section 49-4-141, and in the department's determination of possible violations of Chapter 13 of Title 16, which information shall include but not be limited to price and quantity information.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-115.1, enacted by Ga.
L. 2001, p. 816, § 6.1.

26-4-116. Emergency service providers; contracts with issuing pharmacy; record keeping; inspections.

(a) Dangerous drugs and controlled substances as defined under Chapter 13 of Title 16 shall only be issued to the medical director of an emergency service provider from pharmacies licensed in this state only in accordance with the provisions of this Code section.

(b) The medical director of an emergency service provider and an issuing pharmacy must have a signed contract or agreement designating such pharmacy as a provider of drugs and consultant services and a copy must be filed with the state board and the Department of Public Health prior to any drugs being issued.

(c) A manual of policies and procedures for the handling, storage, labeling, and record keeping of all drugs must be written, approved, and signed by the medical director of an emergency service provider and the pharmacist in charge of an issuing pharmacy. The manual shall contain procedures for the safe and effective use of drugs from acquisition to final disposition.

(d) A written record of all drugs issued to the medical director of an emergency service provider must be maintained by the issuing pharmacy and emergency service provider. Agents of the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency may review all records to determine the accuracy and proper accountability for the use of all drugs.

(e) To provide for the proper control and accountability of drugs, a written record of all drugs used by such emergency service provider shall be provided to the issuing pharmacy within 72 hours of use.

(f) A pharmacist from a contracting issuing pharmacy shall physically inspect the drugs of such emergency service provider to determine compliance with appropriate policies and procedures for the handling, storage, labeling, and record keeping of all drugs not less than annually and maintain records of such inspection for a period of not less than two years. Such an inspection shall, at a minimum, verify that:

- (1) Drugs are properly stored, especially those requiring special storage conditions;

(2) Drugs are properly accounted for by personnel of such emergency service provider;

(3) Proper security measures to prohibit unauthorized access to the drugs are implemented; and

(4) All policies and procedures are followed and enforced.

(g) All outdated, expired, unused, or unusable drugs shall be returned to the issuing pharmacy for proper disposition in a manner acceptable to the board.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-116, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 6-3/HB 214; Ga. L. 2013, p. 736, § 2/SB 216.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2011 amendment of this Code section, see 28 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 147 (2011).

26-4-116.1. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine for schools; pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions.

(a) A physician licensed to practice medicine in this state, an advanced practice registered nurse acting pursuant to the authority of Code Section 43-34-25, and a physician assistant acting pursuant to the authority of subsection (e.1) of Code Section 43-34-103 may prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine in the name of a public or private school for use in accordance with Code Section 20-2-776.2 and in accordance with protocol specified by such physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant.

(b) A physician licensed to practice medicine in this state, an advanced practice registered nurse acting pursuant to the authority of Code Section 43-34-25, and a physician assistant acting pursuant to the authority of subsection (e.1) of Code Section 43-34-103 may prescribe auto-injectable epinephrine in the name of an authorized entity in accordance with Code Section 31-1-14.

(c) A pharmacist may dispense auto-injectable epinephrine pursuant to a prescription issued in accordance with subsection (a) or (b) of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-116.1, enacted by Ga. L. 2013, p. 1039, § 2/HB 337; Ga. L. 2015,

p. 312, § 1/SB 126; Ga. L. 2016, p. 864, § 26/HB 737.

26-4-116.2. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe opioid antagonists; pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions; immunity from liability.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “First responder” means any person or agency who provides on-site care until the arrival of a duly licensed ambulance service. This shall include, but not be limited to, persons who routinely respond to calls for assistance through an affiliation with law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and rescue agencies.

(2) “Harm reduction organization” means an organization which provides direct assistance and services, such as syringe exchanges, counseling, homeless services, advocacy, drug treatment, and screening, to individuals at risk of experiencing an opioid related overdose.

(3) “Opioid antagonist” means any drug that binds to opioid receptors and blocks or inhibits the effects of opioids acting on those receptors and that is approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid related overdose.

(4) “Opioid related overdose” means an acute condition, including, but not limited to, extreme physical illness, decreased level of consciousness, respiratory depression, coma, mania, or death, resulting from the consumption or use of an opioid or another substance with which an opioid was combined or that a layperson would reasonably believe to be resulting from the consumption or use of an opioid or another substance with which an opioid was combined for which medical assistance is required.

(5) “Pain management clinic” means a clinic licensed pursuant to Article 10 of Chapter 34 of Title 43.

(6) “Practitioner” means a physician licensed to practice medicine in this state.

(b) A practitioner acting in good faith and in compliance with the standard of care applicable to that practitioner may prescribe an opioid antagonist for use in accordance with a protocol specified by such practitioner to a person at risk of experiencing an opioid related overdose or to a pain management clinic, first responder, harm reduction organization, family member, friend, or other person in a position to assist a person at risk of experiencing an opioid related overdose.

(c) A pharmacist acting in good faith and in compliance with the standard of care applicable to pharmacists may dispense opioid antagonists pursuant to a prescription issued in accordance with subsection (b) of this Code section or Code Section 31-1-10.

(d) A person acting in good faith and with reasonable care to another

person whom he or she believes to be experiencing an opioid related overdose may administer an opioid antagonist that was prescribed pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section in accordance with the protocol specified by the practitioner or pursuant to Code Section 31-1-10.

(e) The following individuals shall be immune from any civil liability, criminal responsibility, or professional licensing sanctions for the following actions authorized by this Code section:

(1) Any practitioner acting in good faith and in compliance with the standard of care applicable to that practitioner who prescribes an opioid antagonist pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section;

(2) Any practitioner or pharmacist acting in good faith and in compliance with the standard of care applicable to that practitioner or pharmacist who dispenses an opioid antagonist pursuant to a prescription issued in accordance with subsection (b) of this Code section;

(3) The state health officer acting in good faith and as provided in Code Section 31-1-10; and

(4) Any person acting in good faith, other than a practitioner, who administers an opioid antagonist pursuant to subsection (d) of this Code section.

(f) Every pharmacy in this state shall retain a copy of the standing order issued under Code Section 31-1-10.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-116.2, enacted by Ga. L. 2014, p. 683, § 2-2/HB 965; Ga. L. 2017, p. 22, § 4/SB 121; Ga. L. 2017, p. 319, § 3-1/HB 249.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2014, p. 683, § 3-1(b)/HB 965, not codified by the General Assembly, provides, in part, that this Code section shall apply to all acts committed on or after April 24, 2014.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2017 amendment of this Code section, see 34 Ga. St. U. L. Rev. 143 (2017).

For article, "MDL and the Allure of Sidestepping Litigation," see 53 Ga. L. Rev. 1287 (2019).

For comment, "The Opioid Epidemic: Returning to the Basics," see 70 Mercer L. Rev. 525 (2019).

26-4-116.3. Licensed health practitioners authorized to prescribe levalbuterol sulfate or albuterol sulfate for schools; pharmacists authorized to fill prescriptions.

(a) A physician licensed to practice medicine in this state, an advanced practice registered nurse acting pursuant to the authority of Code Section 43-34-25, and a physician assistant acting pursuant to the authority of subsection (e.1) of Code Section 43-34-103 may prescribe

levalbuterol sulfate or albuterol sulfate in the name of a public or private school for use in accordance with Code Section 20-2-776.3.

(b) A pharmacist may dispense levalbuterol sulfate or albuterol sulfate pursuant to a prescription issued in accordance with subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-116.3, enacted by Ga. L. 2015, p. 312, § 1A/SB 126.

26-4-116.4. Undesignated ready-to-use glucagon for schools.

(a) A physician licensed to practice medicine in this state, an advanced practice registered nurse acting pursuant to the authority of Code Section 43-34-25, and a physician assistant acting pursuant to the authority of subsection (e.1) of Code Section 43-34-103 may prescribe undesignated ready-to-use glucagon in the name of a public or private school for use in accordance with Code Section 20-2-779 and in accordance with protocol specified by such physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant.

(b) A pharmacist may dispense undesignated ready-to-use glucagon pursuant to a prescription issued in accordance with subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-116.4, enacted by Ga. L. 2023, p. 31, § 2/HB 440, effective July 1, 2023.

Effective date.

This Code section became effective July 1, 2023.

Cross references.

Health in elementary and secondary education, § 20-2-770 et seq.

26-4-117. Duty to prosecute violations.

(a) It shall be the duty of the prosecuting attorney of the court of competent jurisdiction to whom the board or some other person shall report a violation of this chapter to cause appropriate proceedings to be commenced and prosecuted for the enforcement of the penalties as in such case may be provided.

(b) The board, or any person, corporation, or association, in addition to the remedies set forth in this chapter, may bring an action in a court having competent jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter to enjoin violations of this chapter. Such injunction may issue notwithstanding the existence of an adequate remedy at law.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-117, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-118. Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights; recoupment of disputed funds; appeals process for unfavorable reports; final audit report; investigative audits based on criminal offenses.

(a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as “The Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights.”

(b) Notwithstanding any other law, when an audit of the records of a pharmacy is conducted by a managed care company, insurance company, third-party payor, pharmacy benefits manager, any entity licensed by the Department of Insurance, or any entity that represents such companies, groups, or department, it shall be conducted in accordance with the following bill of rights:

(1) The entity conducting the audit must give the pharmacy notice at least 14 days prior to conducting the audit for each audit cycle and include in such notice a comprehensive list of claims by prescription number to be audited, although the final two digits may be omitted, and the cost of such claims shall not be used as a criterion in determining which claims to audit. The audit shall not include more than 100 prescriptions per audit and an entity shall not audit more than 200 prescriptions in any 12 month period, provided that a refill shall not constitute a separate prescription;

(2) Any audit which involves clinical or professional judgment must be conducted by or in consultation with a pharmacist;

(3) Any clerical or record-keeping error, including but not limited to a typographical error, scrivener’s error, computer error, or omission error, regarding a prescription, front or back label, or other document or record shall not in and of itself constitute fraud. No such claim shall be subject to criminal penalties without proof of intent to commit fraud. No recoupment of the cost of drugs or medicinal supplies properly dispensed shall be allowed if such error has occurred; provided, however, that recoupment shall be allowed to the extent that such error resulted in an overpayment, though recoupment shall be limited to the amount overpaid;

(4) A pharmacy shall be allowed at least 60 days following the receipt of the preliminary audit report in which to correct any error or to address any discrepancy found during an audit which may be subject to recoupment for overpayment as provided for in paragraph (12) of this subsection, including to secure and remit an appropriate copy of the record from a hospital, physician, or other authorized

practitioner of the healing arts for drugs or medicinal supplies written or transmitted by any means of communication if the lack of such a record or an error in such a record is identified in the course of an audit or noticed within the preliminary audit report;

(5) A pharmacy may use the records of a hospital, physician, or other authorized practitioner of the healing arts for drugs or medicinal supplies written or transmitted by any means of communication for purposes of validating the pharmacy record with respect to orders or refills of a legend or narcotic drug;

(6) A finding of an overpayment or underpayment may be a projection based on the number of patients served having a similar diagnosis or on the number of similar orders or refills for similar drugs; however, recoupment of claims must be based on the actual overpayment or underpayment unless the projection for overpayment or underpayment is part of a settlement as agreed to by the pharmacy;

(7) Each pharmacy shall be audited under the same standards and parameters as other similarly situated pharmacies audited by the entity;

(8) The period covered by an audit may not exceed two years from the date the claim was submitted to or adjudicated by a managed care company, insurance company, third-party payor, pharmacy benefits manager, any entity licensed by the Department of Insurance, or any entity that represents such companies, groups, or department;

(9) An audit may not be initiated or scheduled during the first seven calendar days of any month due to the high volume of prescriptions filled during that time unless otherwise consented to by the pharmacy;

(10) The preliminary audit report must be delivered to the pharmacy within 30 days after conclusion of the audit. A final audit report shall be delivered to the pharmacy within 60 days after receipt of the preliminary audit report or final appeal, as provided for in subsection (c) of this Code section, whichever is later;

(11) A pharmacy shall not be held responsible for any penalty or fee in connection with an audit and there shall be no recoupment of funds from a pharmacy in connection with claims for which the pharmacy has already been paid without first complying with the requirements set forth in this Code section;

(12) There shall be no recoupment from a pharmacy except in cases of:

(A) Fraud;

(B) An error that resulted in an overpayment provided that recoupment shall be limited to the amount overpaid; or

(C) A misfill; provided, however, that when a patient receives the correct drug in the correct dosage and quantity pursuant to a prescription drug order then no misfill shall be found to have occurred; and

(13) A pharmacy shall not be audited more than once every six months.

Notwithstanding any other provision in this subsection, the agency conducting the audit shall not use the accounting practice of extrapolation in calculating recoupments or penalties for audits.

(c) Recoupments of any disputed funds shall only occur after final internal disposition of the audit, including the appeals process as set forth in subsection (d) of this Code section.

(d) Each entity conducting an audit shall establish an internal appeals process under which a pharmacy shall have at least 30 days from the delivery of the preliminary audit report to appeal an unfavorable preliminary audit report to the entity. If, following the appeal, the entity finds that an unfavorable audit report or any portion thereof is unsubstantiated, the entity shall dismiss the audit report or such portion without the necessity of any further proceedings.

(e) Each entity conducting an audit shall provide a copy of the final audit report, after completion of any review process, to the plan sponsor at its request or in an alternate format.

(f) This Code section shall not apply to any investigative audit commenced based upon an articulable suspicion of fraud, willful misrepresentation, or abuse, including without limitation investigative audits under Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49, Code Section 33-1-16, or any other statutory provision which authorizes investigations relating to insurance fraud.

(g) The provisions of this Code section shall not apply to the Department of Community Health conducting audits under Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49; provided, however, that the provisions of Code Section 49-4-151.1 shall apply to such audits conducted by the Department of Community Health under Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49.

(h) The entity conducting the audit may not pay the agent or employee who is conducting the audit based on a percentage of the amount recovered.

(i) The Commissioner of Insurance shall have enforcement authority over this Code section and shall promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the provisions of this Code section. The Commissioner of

Insurance shall have the authority to investigate complaints of alleged violations of this Code section; to prohibit recoupment; to order reimbursement of any wrongful recoupment; to institute fines for violations of the law, rules, or regulations; and to take any other actions pursuant to any authority granted pursuant to Chapter 64 of Title 33, relating to the regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-118, enacted by Ga. L. 2006, p. 198, § 1/HB 1371; Ga. L. 2009, p. 8, § 26/SB 46; Ga. L. 2013, p. 615, § 1/HB 179; Ga. L. 2015, p. 337, § 1/HB 470; Ga. L. 2016, p. 864, § 26/HB 737; Ga. L. 2017, p. 219, § 1/HB 206; Ga. L. 2020, p. 654, § 2/HB 918.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, rewrote subsection (b); substituted “commenced based upon an articulable suspicion of” for “which involves”

near the beginning of subsection (f); deleted “paragraph (3) of subsection (b) of” preceding “this Code section” at the beginning of subsection (g); and substituted the present provisions of subsection (i) for the former provisions, which read: “The Commissioner of Insurance shall have enforcement authority over this Code section and shall have the authority granted pursuant to Chapter 64 of Title 33, relating to the regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers.”

26-4-119. Pharmacy anti-steering and transparency; prohibited activities.

(a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the “Pharmacy Anti-Steering and Transparency Act.”

(b) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) The referral of a patient to a pharmacy by an affiliate for pharmacy care represents a potential conflict of interest; and

(2) These referral practices may limit or eliminate competitive alternatives in the health care services market, may result in overutilization of health care services, may increase costs to the health care system, may adversely affect the quality of health care, may disproportionately harm patients in rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia, and shall be against the public policy of this state.

(c) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “Affiliate” means a person licensed under Title 33 which, either directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries:

(A) Has an investment or ownership interest in a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia;

(B) Shares common ownership with a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia; or

(C) Has as an investor or ownership interest holder a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia.

(2) "Referral" means:

(A) Ordering of a patient to a pharmacy by an affiliate either orally or in writing, including online messaging;

(B) Ordering of a patient to a pharmacy that has an affiliate either orally or in writing, including online messaging by a person licensed under Title 33 as a result of an arrangement or agreement between the person and the pharmacy's affiliate;

(C) Offering or implementing plan designs that require patients to utilize affiliated pharmacies or other pharmacies with affiliates, or that increase plan or patient costs, including requiring patients to pay the full cost for a prescription when patients choose not to use affiliated pharmacies or other pharmacies with affiliates; or

(D) Patient or prospective patient specific advertising, marketing, or promotion of a pharmacy by an affiliate or other person licensed under Title 33 as a result of an arrangement or agreement with the pharmacy's affiliate.

Subject to the foregoing, this term shall not include a pharmacy's inclusion by an affiliate or other person licensed under Title 33 as a result of an arrangement or agreement with the pharmacy's affiliate in communications to patients, including patient and prospective patient specific communications, regarding network pharmacies and prices, provided that the affiliate or other person licensed under Title 33 includes information regarding eligible nonaffiliate pharmacies in such communications and the information provided is accurate.

(d) A pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia shall be proscribed from:

(1) Transferring or sharing records relative to prescription information containing patient identifiable and prescriber identifiable data to or from an affiliate for any commercial purpose; provided, however, that nothing shall be construed to prohibit the exchange of prescription information between a pharmacy and its affiliate for the limited purposes of pharmacy reimbursement; formulary compliance; pharmacy care; public health activities otherwise authorized by law; or utilization review by a health care provider; or

(2) Presenting a claim for payment to any individual, third-party payor, affiliate, or other entity for a service furnished pursuant to a referral from an affiliate or other person licensed under Title 33.

(e) This Code section shall not be construed to prohibit a pharmacy from entering into an agreement with an affiliate to provide pharmacy

care to patients, provided that the pharmacy does not receive referrals in violation of subsection (d) of this Code section and the pharmacy provides the disclosures required in subsection (f) of this Code section.

(f) If a pharmacy licensed or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in this state has an affiliate, it shall annually file with the board a disclosure statement identifying all such affiliates.

(g) In addition to any other remedy provided by law, a violation of this Code section by a pharmacy shall be grounds for disciplinary action by the board pursuant to its authority granted in this chapter.

(h) A pharmacist who fills a prescription that violates subsection (d) of this Code section shall not be liable under this Code section.

(i) This Code section shall not apply to:

(1) Any licensed group model health maintenance organization with an exclusive medical group contract which operates its own pharmacies which are licensed under Code Section 26-4-110;

(2) Any hospital or related institution; or

(3) Any referrals by an affiliate for pharmacy services and prescriptions to patients in skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, continuing care retirement communities, home health agencies, or hospices.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-119, enacted by Ga. L. 2019, p. 943, § 1/HB 233; Ga. L. 2020, p. 654, § 3/HB 918.

The 2020 amendment, effective January 1, 2021, rewrote subsection (c), which read: “As used in this Code section, the term:

“(1) ‘Affiliate’ means a person licensed under Title 33 which, either directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries:

“(A) Has an investment or ownership interest in a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia;

“(B) Shares common ownership with a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia; or

“(C) Has as an investor or ownership interest holder a pharmacy licensed in or holding a nonresident pharmacy permit in Georgia.

“(2) ‘Referral’ means:

“(A) Ordering of a patient to a pharmacy

by an affiliate either orally or in writing, including online messaging;

“(B) Offering or implementing plan designs that require patients to utilize affiliated pharmacies; or

“(C) Patient or prospective patient specific advertising, marketing, or promotion of a pharmacy by an affiliate.

“Subject to the foregoing, this term shall not include a pharmacy’s inclusion by an affiliate in communications to patients, including patient and prospective patient specific communications, regarding network pharmacies and prices, provided that the affiliate includes information regarding eligible nonaffiliate pharmacies in such communications and the information provided is accurate.”; rewrote paragraph (d)(2), which read: “Presenting a claim for payment to any individual, third-party payor, affiliate, or other entity for a service furnished pursuant to a referral from an affiliate; provided, however, that this shall not apply to referrals from an affiliate for limited distribution pre-

scription drugs requiring special handling and not commonly carried at retail pharmacies or oncology clinics or practices.”; and rewrote subsection (i), which read: “This Code section shall not apply to:

“(A) Any licensed group model health maintenance organization with an exclusive medical group contract which operates its own pharmacies licensed under Code Section 26-4-110.1;

“(B) Any hospital or related institution;

“(C) Any referrals by an affiliate for pharmacy services and prescriptions to patients in skilled nursing facilities, inter-

mediate care facilities, continuing care retirement communities, home health agencies, or hospices; or

“(D) Any care management organization, as defined in Chapter 21A of Title 33.”

Administrative rules and regulations.

Pharmacy Anti-Steering and Transparency Act and Affiliates, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, State Board of Pharmacy, Retail Pharmacy Regulations, Rule 480-10-.18.

ARTICLE 7

PRACTITIONERS OF THE HEALING ARTS

26-4-130. Dispensing drugs; compliance with labeling and packaging requirements; records available for inspection by board; renewal of licenses.

(a) For purposes of this Code section, the term:

(1) “Drugs” means drugs as defined in this chapter and controlled substances as defined in Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Title 16.

(2) “Practitioner” or “practitioner of the healing arts” means, notwithstanding Code Section 26-4-5, a person licensed as a dentist, physician, podiatrist, or veterinarian under Chapter 11, 34, 35, or 50, respectively, of Title 43.

(b) Except as otherwise required pursuant to Code Section 26-4-86, the other provisions of this chapter and Article 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 16 shall not apply to practitioners of the healing arts prescribing or compounding their own prescriptions and dispensing drugs except as provided in this Code section. Nor shall such provisions prohibit the administration of drugs by a practitioner of the healing arts or any person under the supervision of such practitioner or by the direction of such practitioner except as provided in this Code section. Any term used in this subsection and defined in Code Section 43-34-23 shall have the meaning provided for such term in Code Section 43-34-23. The other provisions of this chapter and Articles 2 and 3 of Chapter 13 of Title 16 shall not apply to persons authorized by Code Section 43-34-23 to order, dispense, or administer drugs when such persons order, dispense, or administer those drugs in conformity with Code Section 43-34-23. When a person dispenses drugs pursuant to the authority delegated to that person under the provisions of Code Section 43-34-23, with regard to the drugs so dispensed, that person shall comply with the require-

ments placed upon practitioners by subsections (c) and (d) of this Code section.

(c) All practitioners who dispense drugs shall comply with all record-keeping, labeling, packaging, and storage requirements imposed upon pharmacists and pharmacies with regard to such drugs pursuant to this chapter and Chapter 13 of Title 16.

(d) All practitioners who dispense drugs shall make all records required to be kept under subsection (c) of this Code section available for inspection by the board.

(e) Any practitioner who desires to dispense drugs shall notify, at the time of the renewal of that practitioner's license to practice, that practitioner's respective licensing board of that practitioner's intention to dispense drugs. That licensing board shall notify the board regarding each practitioner concerning whom that board has received a notification of intention to dispense drugs. The licensing board's notification shall include the following information:

- (1) The name and address of the practitioner;
- (2) The state professional license number of the practitioner;
- (3) The practitioner's Drug Enforcement Administration license number; and
- (4) The name and address of the office or facility from which such drugs shall be dispensed and the address where all records pertaining to such drugs shall be maintained.

(f) The board shall have the authority to promulgate rules and regulations governing the dispensing of drugs pursuant to this Code section.

(g) This Code section shall not apply to practitioners who provide to their patients at no cost manufacturer's samples of drugs.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-130, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 2000, p. 1706, § 24; Ga. L. 2009, p. 859, § 8/HB 509; Ga. L. 2013, p. 127, § 9/HB 209.

Law reviews.

For article, "Off-Label Innovation," see 56 Ga. L. Rev. 701 (2022).

26-4-131. Examination of food, drug, and cosmetic specimens; violations of federal law.

The examination of specimens of foods, drugs, and cosmetics shall be made by the state chemist or under direction of that chemist and supervision for the purpose of determining from such examination whether such articles are adulterated or misbranded within the meaning of this title; and, in the case of drugs and cosmetics, if it shall appear

from any such examination that any such specimens are adulterated or misbranded within the meaning of this title, a copy of the results of the analysis of the examination of such article, duly authenticated by the analyst or officer making such examination under the oath of such analyst or officer, shall be forwarded to the board without delay. If it shall appear to the satisfaction of the board and the Attorney General, in the case of adulterated or misbranded drugs, that the article involved was shipped in interstate commerce or the act complained of comes under the supervision and jurisdiction of the United States, the board shall certify the case to the United States district attorney in whose district the violation may have been committed.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-131, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 8**THIRD-PARTY PRESCRIPTION PROGRAMS****JUDICIAL DECISIONS**

Editor's notes. — In light of the similarity of the statutory provisions, annotations decided under former O.C.G.A. § 26-4-140 are included in the annotations for this article.

Preemption by federal law. — Georgia Third Party Prescription Program Law of 1983, affects employee benefit

plans protected by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), 29 U.S.C. § 1001, et seq., and is therefore preempted by the federal act. *GMC v. Caldwell*, 647 F. Supp. 585, 1986 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 19179 (N.D. Ga. 1986) (decided under former O.C.G.A. § 26-4-140).

26-4-140. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Third-party Prescription Program Law of 1983."

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-140, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-141. Legislative findings.

The General Assembly finds that certain practices are unfair to providers of pharmaceuticals, are burdensome and costly to those providers, result in unfair increased costs to certain consumers, and threaten the availability of pharmaceuticals to the public. The General Assembly further finds that there is a need for regulation of certain practices engaged in by some third-party prescription program administrators.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-141, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-142. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Administrator” means that person, corporation, or business entity which administers a program, is legally liable for any payments to a participating pharmacy under a program, or both.

(2) “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Insurance.

(3) “Contract” means a program contract.

(4) “Enrollee” means a consumer who receives pharmaceuticals under a program.

(5) “Participating pharmacy” means a pharmacy having a contract to provide pharmaceuticals to enrollees under a program.

(6) “Pharmaceuticals” means drugs, devices, or services available from a pharmacy.

(7) “Prevailing rate” means the average wholesale price of the pharmaceutical during the applicable period, plus the usual, customary, and reasonable dispensing fee added thereto, provided that in no event shall the amount submitted for reimbursement by a pharmacy under this article exceed the eighty-fifth percentile of the retail prices charged by all pharmacies in Georgia for the same or similar pharmaceuticals during such period of time or the actual price charged by the submitting pharmacy to consumers, other than enrollees, for the same or similar pharmaceuticals during such period of time, whichever is less.

(8) “Program” means a third-party prescription program.

(9) “Program contract” means that contract creating rights and obligations between a participating pharmacy and a program or administrator.

(10) “Program identification card” means a document which identifies enrollees as participants in a program.

(11) “Third-party prescription program” means any system of providing payments or reimbursement of payments made for pharmaceuticals pursuant to a contract between a pharmacy and another party, including insurance companies and administrators of programs, who are not consumers of the pharmaceuticals under that contract and shall include, without being limited to, insurance plans whereby an enrollee receives pharmaceuticals which are paid for by

insurance companies or administrators, or by an agent of his employer, or by others.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-142, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-143. Approval of program by Commissioner; exemptions.

(a) Unless the program is exempt under subsection (b) of this Code section, no administrator, person, corporation, or business entity shall offer, operate, or administer a program in this state unless that program has been submitted to the Commissioner, in a manner provided by the Commissioner, and is approved by the Commissioner as complying with the requirements of this article.

(b)(1) A program contract existing immediately prior to January 1, 1984, shall be exempt from the requirements of this article but shall not be renewed or otherwise extended beyond its renewal or expiration date, respectively, as specified immediately prior to January 1, 1984, unless the program under the renewed or extended contract is approved by the Commissioner under subsection (a) of this Code section, except that if no such expiration or renewal date is provided in that program contract, the program contract shall be submitted not later than March 1, 1984, to the Commissioner for approval.

(2) A program providing pharmaceuticals pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49, the “Georgia Medical Assistance Act of 1977,” shall be exempt from the requirements of this article.

(3) A policy or plan regulated under Title 33, relating to insurance, which does not include or utilize a third-party prescription program or contract shall be exempt from the requirements of this article.

(c) A program approved by the Commissioner may have that approval revoked or suspended if it fails to meet any requirements therefor specified in this article or if it fails to be administered in conformity with those requirements.

(d) Disapproval or revocation or suspension of approval of a program by the Commissioner shall constitute a contested case for purposes of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-143, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-144. Claim reimbursements to participating pharmacies.

(a) A program offered in this state and not exempt under subsection (b) of Code Section 26-4-143 shall provide all of the following:

(1) A statement of the method, frequency, and amount of claim reimbursement to participating pharmacies;

(2) That any valid claim for pharmaceuticals under this program will be paid to a participating pharmacy within 30 days after the claim is received by the administrator if that claim is complete, accurate, and legible, as determined by the administrator;

(3) That any valid claim not paid as required in paragraph (2) of this Code section shall be subject to interest at the rate specified in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 33-25-10, relating to payment of interest on life insurance proceeds;

(4) That reimbursement rates for pharmaceuticals shall not be less than the prevailing rates therefor paid by consumers who are not enrollees;

(5) That each participating pharmacy and enrollee will be notified in writing by the administrator of the cancellation of any program at least 30 days prior to the effective date of cancellation, except that where the administrator is not notified of such cancellation at least 30 days prior to the effective date of cancellation, the written notice shall be provided within 30 days after the administrator received his or her notification;

(6) That program identification cards issued to an enrollee show an expiration date;

(7) That the administrator shall make reasonable efforts to gain possession of all program identification cards upon cancellation of a program for which the cards were issued;

(8) That a valid claim by a participating pharmacy will not be denied upon the basis of the fraudulent use of a program identification card;

(9) That at least 30 days prior to the date a program becomes effective, the program contract therefor shall be offered to all pharmacies located within those counties wherein reside enrollees in that program, which pharmacies shall have at least 30 days from the time they receive the offer to accept that offer and become participating pharmacies;

(10) That any audit by a program to verify claims by a participating pharmacy shall comply with generally accepted accounting principles and procedures but shall not extrapolate randomly sampled

data as a basis for reimbursement from the pharmacy which is audited or from one participating pharmacy to be the corresponding data for another participating pharmacy. In the event a claim against a participating pharmacy for reimbursement is based upon a program audit, the administrator of the program shall submit details of the audit to that participating pharmacy, and any dispute relating thereto shall be resolved under the dispute resolution procedures required under paragraph (11) of this subsection, with the Commissioner to render a final binding decision in the dispute if either party is dissatisfied with the outcome under the dispute resolution procedure; and

(11) A dispute resolution procedure for disputes between the program or administrator and participating pharmacies and between the program or administrator and enrollees.

(b) A program which meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section shall not be administered except in conformity with those requirements, and the administration of that program except in conformity with those requirements shall constitute a violation of this Code section by the administrator of that program.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-144, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, § 26.

26-4-145. Excessive charges to enrollees prohibited.

A participating pharmacy shall not submit claims for payment for pharmaceuticals under a program for charges in excess of those charged by that pharmacy to consumers, other than enrollees, for the same or similar pharmaceuticals.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-145, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-146. Administrator registration.

(a) On and after January 1, 1984, no person, corporation, or business entity shall serve as administrator of a program which has no administrator registered under this Code section unless that person, corporation, or business entity is registered as administrator of that program with the Commissioner.

(b) No administrator may be registered unless the administrator gives bond to the Commissioner conditioned to pay all losses, damages, and expenses incurred as a result of any violation of this article by the administrator or the program being administered thereby. The bond shall be with a surety approved by the Commissioner in the amount of \$200,000.00 or the total annual payments made in the immediately

preceding year by all programs administered by that administrator, whichever is greater; provided, however, if the administrator is an insurance company licensed to transact insurance in this state or if the administrator is a self-insurer and is approved by the Commissioner, then such administrator shall not be required to give bond to the Commissioner.

(c) No program shall be required to have more than one administrator registered and bonded under this Code section.

(d) An administrator may have his or her registration suspended or revoked by the Commissioner upon any violation of this article by the administrator or when any program administered by the administrator fails to conform to the requirements of this article. The refusal by the Commissioner to register an administrator and the suspension or revocation of an administrator's registration shall constitute a contested case for purposes of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."

(e) Records, information, and other identifying matter obtained through the submission of a claim for reimbursement by a participating pharmacy shall be used exclusively and solely for the purposes of verification and payment to the participating pharmacy and policyholder and for no other purposes.

History. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1; Ga. L. 1999, p. 81, Code 1981, § 26-4-146, enacted by Ga. § 26.

26-4-147. Liability of enrollees.

No enrollee may utilize a program identification card to obtain pharmaceuticals after the program has been canceled and after the enrollee has received notification of the cancellation, and if such card is so utilized, that enrollee shall be liable to the administrator of that program for the cost of those pharmaceuticals.

History. Code 1981, § 26-4-147, enacted by Ga. L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-148. Penalties.

(a) Any person, corporation, or business entity which violates subsection (a) of Code Section 26-4-146 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

(b) Any person, corporation, or business entity which violates any provision of this article shall be subject to a civil penalty in the amount of \$1,000.00 for each act in violation of this article or, if the violation was knowing and willful, a civil penalty of \$5,000.00 for each act in violation of this article.

(c) Any person injured as a result of a violation of this article may bring an action against that person, corporation, or business entity violating this article for the recovery of all actual damages occurring as a result thereof, plus attorneys' fees.

(d) An action may be brought against any person, corporation, or business entity subject to civil penalties or an action for damages under this Code section in the county in this state in which the person resides or corporation or business entity maintains an office or, if neither residing nor maintaining an office in this state, in the Superior Court of Fulton County.

(e) All penalties and remedies provided in this Code section are cumulative of each other and of any other penalties and remedies otherwise provided by law.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-148, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 9

POISONS

26-4-160. Sales and labeling.

No person shall furnish by retail sale any poison enumerated in this Code section without distinctly labeling the bottle, box, vessel, or paper in which the poison is contained, and also the outside wrapper or cover thereof, with the name of the article, the word "Poison," and the name and place of business of the person who furnishes the same; and no poison shall be furnished unless upon due inquiry it shall be found that the person to whom it is delivered is aware of its poisonous character and shall represent that it is to be used for a legitimate purpose:

(1) Schedule "A." Arsenic and its preparations, corrosive sublimate, white precipitate, red precipitate, biniodide of mercury, cyanide of potassium, hydrocyanic acid, strychnia, and all other poisonous vegetable alkaloids and their salts; essential oil of bitter almonds, opium and its preparations, except paregoric and other preparations of opium containing less than two grains to the ounce; and

(2) Schedule "B." Aconite, belladonna, colchicum, conium, nuxvomica, henbane, creosote, digitalis, and their pharmaceutical preparations; croton oil, chloroform, chloral hydrate, sulfate of zinc, mineral acids, carbolic acid, and oxalic acid.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-160, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-161. Procedure on sale or delivery of listed poisons.

No licensed pharmacist shall sell or deliver any of the poisons included in paragraph (1) of Code Section 26-4-160 without first making an entry in a book for that purpose, stating the date of the delivery, the name and address of the person receiving the poison, the name and quantity of the poison, the purpose for which it is represented by such person to be required, and the name of the dispenser. Such book shall always be open for inspection by the proper authorities and shall be preserved for reference for at least five years.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-161, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-162. Prescriptions by practitioners of the healing arts.

This article shall not apply to the dispensing of poisons in not unusual quantities or doses, upon the prescriptions of practitioners of the healing arts.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-162, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

26-4-163. Penalty.

Any person violating this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-163, enacted by Ga.
L. 1998, p. 686, § 1.

ARTICLE 10**NUCLEAR PHARMACY LAW****Administrative rules and regulations.**

Nuclear Pharmacies and Pharmacists,
Official Compilation of the Rules and

Regulations of the State of Georgia, State
Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-25-.01 et
seq.

26-4-170. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Nuclear Pharmacy Law.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-170, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-171. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) "Authentication of product history" means, but is not limited to, identifying the purchasing source, the ultimate fate, and any intermediate handling of any component of a radiopharmaceutical.

(2) "Board" means the State Board of Pharmacy.

(3) "Compounding of radiopharmaceuticals" means the addition of a radioactive substance to nonradioactive substances or the use of a radioactive substance in preparation for single or multidose dispensation upon the prescription order of a physician who is licensed to use radioactive materials. Compounding of radiopharmaceuticals may include: loading and eluting of radionuclide generators; using manufactured reagent kits to prepare radiopharmaceuticals; preparing reagent kits; aliquoting reagents; formulation and quality assurance testing of radiochemicals for use as radiopharmaceuticals; and radiolabeling of compounds or products, including biological products, for use as radiopharmaceuticals.

(4) "Department" means the Department of Natural Resources.

(5) "Internal test assessment" means, but is not limited to, conducting those tests of quality assurance necessary to ensure the integrity of the test.

(6) "Manufacturing of radiopharmaceuticals" means the preparation, derivation, or production of a product to which a radioactive substance is or will be added to provide a radiopharmaceutical for sale, resale, redistribution, or reconstitution.

(7) "Nuclear pharmacy" means a pharmacy providing radiopharmaceutical service.

(8) "Radiopharmaceutical" means radioactive drugs and chemical products used for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes and includes the terms radioactive pharmaceuticals, radioisotopes, and radioactive tracers.

(9) "Radiopharmaceutical quality assurance" means, but is not limited to, the performance of appropriate chemical, biological, and physical tests on radiopharmaceuticals and their component materials and the interpretation of the resulting data to determine their suitability for use in humans and animals, including internal test assessment, authentication of product history, and the keeping of proper records.

(10) "Radiopharmaceutical service" means, but is not limited to, the compounding, dispensing, labeling, and delivering of radiophar-

maceuticals; the participation in radiopharmaceutical selection and radiopharmaceutical utilization review; the maintenance of radiopharmaceutical quality assurance; and the responsibility for advising, where necessary or where regulated, of therapeutic values, hazards, and use of radiopharmaceuticals; and the offering or performing of those acts, services, operations, or transactions necessary in the conduct, operation, management, and control of a nuclear pharmacy.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-171, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-172. License requirements generally.

(a) All persons, firms, pharmacies, or corporations which receive, possess, transfer, or manufacture for sale or resale radiopharmaceuticals shall be licensed in accordance with the provisions of this article. No person may receive, acquire, possess, compound, or dispense any radiopharmaceutical except in accordance with the provisions of this article and the conditions of rules and regulations promulgated by the Board of Natural Resources for radioactive materials and administered by the department. The requirements of this article are in addition to, and not in substitution of, other applicable statutes and regulations administered by the State Board of Pharmacy or the department.

(b) Nothing in this article shall be construed as requiring a licensed physician to obtain a separate license as a nuclear pharmacist, when his or her use of radiopharmaceuticals is limited to the diagnosis and treatment of his or her own patients.

(c) Nothing in this article shall be construed so as to require a clinical laboratory certified by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which is licensed by the Department of Community Health to handle radioactive materials, to obtain the services of a nuclear pharmacist, or to have a nuclear pharmacy license, unless the laboratory is engaged in the commercial sale or resale of radiopharmaceuticals.

(d) Nothing in this article shall be construed to require a department of nuclear medicine which is located in a hospital of 250 beds or less, which has a board certified radiologist in the practice of nuclear medicine, and which is licensed by the department to handle radioactive materials to obtain the services of a nuclear pharmacist or to have a nuclear pharmacy license.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-172, enacted by Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 10; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2021, p. 472, § 2/HB 93.

The 2021 amendment, effective July 1, 2021, substituted “require a clinical

laboratory certified by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services” for “require a licensed clinical laboratory” near the beginning of subsection (c).

26-4-173. Nuclear pharmacist license; applicant requirements.

(a) An applicant for a license as a nuclear pharmacist shall:

(1) Be a currently licensed pharmacist in the State of Georgia;

(2) Meet the minimum requirements and be licensed to possess and use radioactive materials for medical use, as authorized by the department; and

(3) Have met all requirements for training and experience established by the board in rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this authority; provided, however, rules and regulations prescribing training and experience requirements for nuclear pharmacists shall have first been approved by the department.

(b) A license as a nuclear pharmacist shall be issued to any pharmacist who makes application to the board, together with a required fee, and meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-173, enacted by Ga. L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-174. Nuclear pharmacy operators permit; requirements.

(a) A permit to operate a nuclear pharmacy shall only be issued in accordance with Article 6 of this chapter with the added designation that the pharmacist in charge be a nuclear pharmacist. All personnel performing tasks in the preparation and distribution of radiopharmaceuticals shall be under the supervision of a licensed nuclear pharmacist. All acts of compounding and dispensing radiopharmaceuticals shall be performed by the nuclear pharmacist or by a pharmacist or pharmacy intern under the direct supervision and control of a nuclear pharmacist. A nuclear pharmacist shall be responsible for all operations of the nuclear pharmacy and shall be in personal attendance at all times when the acts of compounding and dispensing are performed and the pharmacy is open for business.

(b) Nuclear pharmacies shall have adequate space, commensurate with the scope of services provided and, as required by rules and regulations promulgated by the board pursuant to implementation of this article, shall meet minimal space requirements established for all pharmacies in the state. The nuclear pharmacy area shall be separate

from the pharmacy areas for nonradiopharmaceuticals and shall be secured from unauthorized personnel.

(c) Nuclear pharmacies shall only dispense radiopharmaceuticals which comply with acceptable professional standards of radiopharmaceutical quality assurance.

(d) Nuclear pharmacies shall maintain records of acquisition and disposition of all radiopharmaceuticals in accordance with requirements of the board and the department.

(e) Nuclear pharmacies shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations of federal and state agencies, including those laws and regulations governing nonradioactive drugs and pharmaceuticals.

(f) Radiopharmaceuticals are to be dispensed only upon prescription order by a physician who is authorized by the department to possess, use, and administer radioactive materials.

(g) A nuclear pharmacist may transfer to authorized persons radioactive materials not intended for drug use, in accordance with department regulations for radioactive materials. A nuclear pharmacy may also furnish radioactive materials for use to physicians, for individual patient use in accordance with subsection (f) of this Code section.

(h) In addition to any labeling requirements required by rules and regulations of the board for nonradiopharmaceuticals, the immediate outer container of a radiopharmaceutical to be dispensed shall also be labeled as required in rules and regulations of the board and of the department.

(i) The amount of radioactivity dispensed in each individual preparation shall be determined by the nuclear pharmacist through radiometric methods immediately prior to dispensing.

(j) Nuclear pharmacies may redistribute federal Food and Drug Administration approved radiopharmaceuticals if the pharmacy does not process the radiopharmaceuticals in any manner or violate the product packaging. Such redistribution may only be made to another nuclear pharmacy or other authorized person or institution.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-174, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-175. Equipment requirements.

Nuclear pharmacies shall meet all requirements for items and articles of equipment as required through rules and regulations of the board. Nuclear pharmacies shall also have equipment required for the

safe handling and storage of radioactive materials, as established by rules of the department.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-175, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-176. Limiting, suspending, or revoking license.

The board may limit, suspend, or revoke licenses issued under the provisions of this article, or impose any other reasonable sanctions upon holders of such licenses upon proof of any of the violations specified in Code Sections 26-4-60 and 26-4-113.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-176, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-177. Grounds for refusal to grant license.

The board may refuse to grant a license to any person, firm, or corporation for any of the grounds set forth in Code Sections 26-4-60 and 26-4-113. In addition, the board may refuse to grant a license if any applicant shall make any false statement in the application or cheats in any manner upon any examination administered pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-177, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-178. Authorized to promulgate rules.

The board is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-178, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

26-4-179. Authority of department.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to repeal the authority of the Department of Natural Resources to regulate the use of radioactive materials.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-179, enacted by Ga.
L. 1999, p. 277, § 10.

ARTICLE 11

UTILIZATION OF UNUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

26-4-190 through 26-4-195. [Reserved].**History.**

Code 1981, §§ 26-4-190 through 26-4-195, enacted by Ga. L. 2006, p. 152, § 1/HB 1178; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-21/HB 228; Ga. L. 2011, p. 227, § 8/SB 178; Ga. L. 2011, p. 705, § 5-8/HB 214;

repealed by Ga. L. 2016, p. 524, § 2/HB 897, effective July 1, 2016.

Editor's notes.

Ga. L. 2016, p. 524, § 2/HB 897 repealed and reserved this article, effective July 1, 2016.

ARTICLE 12

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION INTEGRITY

Delayed effective date.

Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205, provides that this article becomes effective only when funds are specifically appropriated for purposes of this Act in an Appropriations Act making specific reference to

that Act. Funds were not appropriated at the 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 session of the General Assembly.

26-4-200. [For effective date, see note.] Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Prescription Medication Integrity Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-200, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205.

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

26-4-201. [For effective date, see note.] Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Authenticate” means to affirmatively verify before any wholesale distribution of a prescription drug occurs that each transaction listed on the pedigree has occurred.

(2) “Authorized distributor of record” means a distributor with whom a manufacturer has established an ongoing relationship to distribute the manufacturer’s prescription drugs.

(3) “Board” means the State Board of Pharmacy.

(4) “Broker” has the same meaning as a third-party logistics provider.

(5) “Chain pharmacy warehouse” means a physical location for prescription drugs that acts as a central warehouse and performs

intracompany sales or transfers of such drugs to a group of chain pharmacies that have the same common ownership or control.

(6) “Co-licensed pharmaceutical products” means pharmaceutical products:

(A) That have been approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration; and

(B) Concerning which two or more parties have the right to engage in a business activity or occupation concerning the pharmaceutical products.

(7) “Co-licensee” means a party to a co-licensed pharmaceutical product.

(8) “Distribute” means to deliver a drug or device other than by administering or dispensing.

(9) “Drop shipment arrangement” means the physical shipment of a prescription from a manufacturer, that manufacturer’s co-licensee, that manufacturer’s third-party logistics provider, or that manufacturer’s authorized distributor of record directly to a chain pharmacy warehouse, pharmacy buying cooperative warehouse, pharmacy, or other persons authorized under law to dispense or administer prescription drugs but wherein the sale and title for the prescription drug passes between a wholesale drug distributor and the party that directly receives the prescription drug. In order to be considered part of the normal distribution channel and participate in a drop shipment as described in this paragraph, the wholesale drug distributor must be an authorized distributor of record.

(10) “Facility” means a facility of a wholesale distributor where prescription drugs are stored, handled, repackaged, or offered for sale.

(11) “Manufacturer” means a person licensed or approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration to engage in the manufacture of drugs or devices, consistent with the definition of “manufacturer” under the regulations and interpreted guidances implementing the Prescription Drug Marketing Act.

(12) “Manufacturer’s exclusive distributor” means an entity that contracts with a manufacturer to provide or coordinate warehousing, distribution, or other services for a manufacturer and takes title to that manufacturer’s prescription drug. To be considered part of the normal distribution channel, a manufacturer’s exclusive distribution must be an authorized distributor of record.

(13) “Normal distribution channel” means a chain of custody for a prescription drug, excluding all devices and veterinary prescription

drugs, that goes directly or by drop shipment from a manufacturer of the prescription drug, or from that manufacturer to that manufacturer's co-licensed partner, or from that manufacturer to that manufacturer's third-party logistics provider, or from that manufacturer to that manufacturer's exclusive distributor, to:

(A) Either a pharmacy or to other designated persons authorized by law to dispense or administer such drug;

(B) An authorized distributor or record, and then to either a pharmacy, or to other designated persons authorized by law to dispense or administer such drug;

(C) An authorized distributor of record to one other authorized distributor of record to an office based health care practitioner authorized by law to dispense or administer such drug to a patient;

(D) An authorized distributor of record to a pharmacy warehouse or other entity that redistributes by intracompany sale to a pharmacy or other designated persons authorized to dispense or administer the drug;

(E) A pharmacy warehouse or other entity that redistributes by intracompany sale to a pharmacy or other designated persons authorized to dispense or administer the drug; or

(F) Another entity as prescribed by the board's regulations.

(14) "Ongoing relationship" means an association that exists when a wholesale drug distributor, including any member of its affiliated group, as defined in Section 1504 of the Internal Revenue Code, of which the wholesale drug distributor is a member:

(A) Is listed on the manufacturer's list of authorized distributors of record, which is updated by the manufacturer on no less than a monthly basis; or

(B) Has a written agreement currently in effect with the manufacturer evidencing such ongoing relationship.

(15) "Pedigree" means a document or electronic file containing information that records each distribution of any given prescription drug.

(16) "Pharmacy buying cooperative warehouse" means a permanent physical location that acts as a central warehouse for drugs and from which sales of drugs are made to a group of pharmacies that are member owners of the buying cooperative operating the warehouse. Pharmacy buying cooperative warehouses must be licensed as wholesale distributors.

(17) “Prescription drug” means any drug (including any biological product, except for blood and blood components intended for transfusion or biological products that are also medical devices) required by federal law (including federal regulation) to be dispensed only by a prescription, including finished dosage forms and bulk drug substances subject to section 503(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

(18) “Repackage” means repackaging or otherwise changing the container, wrapper, or labeling to further the distribution of a prescription drug; provided, however, that this shall not apply to pharmacists in the dispensing of prescription drugs to the patient.

(19) “Repackager” means a person who repackages.

(20) “Third-party logistics provider” means an entity that provides or coordinates warehousing, distribution, or other services on behalf of a manufacturer but does not take title to a drug or have general responsibility to direct the sale or other disposition of the drug. To be considered part of the normal distribution channel, a third party logistics provider must be an authorized distributor of record.

(21) “Wholesale distributor” means any person engaged in wholesale distribution of drugs, including but not limited to repackagers; own label distributors; private label distributors; jobbers; brokers; warehouses, including manufacturers’ and distributors’ warehouses and wholesale drug warehouses; independent wholesale drug traders; and retail and hospital pharmacies and chain pharmacy warehouses that conduct wholesale distributions. This term shall not include manufacturers.

(22) “Wholesale distribution” shall not include:

(A) Intracompany sales of prescription drugs, meaning any transaction or transfer between any division, subsidiary, parent, or affiliated or related company under common ownership or control of a corporate entity, except that nothing contained herein shall be construed to prohibit the board from requiring that other records of these transactions shall be kept in accordance with law and regulation not found in this article;

(B) The sale, purchase, distribution, trade, or transfer of a prescription drug or offer to sell, purchase, distribute, trade, or transfer a prescription drug for emergency medical reasons including transfers of a prescription drug from retail pharmacy to retail pharmacy, except that nothing contained herein shall be construed to prohibit the board from requiring that other records of these transactions shall be kept in accordance with law and regulation not found in this article;

(C) The distribution of prescription drug samples by manufacturers' representatives;

(D) Prescription drug returns when conducted by a retail pharmacy or chain pharmacy warehouse, by a hospital, health care entity, or charitable institution in accordance with 21 C.F.R. Section 203.23, or by any designated persons authorized by law to dispense or administer the prescription drug except in cases where a pedigree is already required under the provisions of this article, in which case any return of that prescription drug to a wholesaler or manufacturer shall be subject to the provisions of Code Section 26-4-202;

(E) The sale of minimal quantities of prescription drugs by retail pharmacies to licensed practitioners for office use, except that nothing contained herein shall be construed to prohibit the board from requiring that other records of these transactions shall be kept in accordance with law and regulation not found in this article;

(F) Retail pharmacies' delivery of prescription drugs to a patient or patient's agent pursuant to the lawful order of a licensed practitioner;

(G) The delivery of, or offer to deliver, a prescription drug by a common carrier solely in the common carrier's usual course of business of transporting prescription drugs, and such common carrier does not store, warehouse, or take legal ownership of the prescription drug;

(H) The sale or transfer from a retail pharmacy, pharmacy buying cooperative warehouse, or chain pharmacy warehouse of expired, damaged, returned, or recalled prescription drugs to the original manufacturer, originating wholesale distributor, or to a third party returns processor, to the extent permitted by federal rule, regulation, or law; or

(I) The sale, transfer, merger, or consolidation of all or part of the business of a pharmacy or pharmacies from or with another pharmacy or pharmacies, whether accomplished as a purchase and sale of stock or business assets.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-201, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205; Ga. L. 2013, p. 141, § 26/HB 79.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

26-4-202. [For effective date, see note.] Pedigrees for prescription drugs.

(a)(1) Each person who is engaged in wholesale distribution of prescription drugs shall establish and maintain inventories and records of all transactions regarding the receipt and distribution or other disposition of the prescription drugs. These records shall include pedigrees for all prescription drugs that leave or have ever left the normal distribution channel in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the board.

(2) A retail pharmacy or chain pharmacy warehouse shall comply with the requirements of this Code section only if the retail pharmacy or chain pharmacy warehouse engages in wholesale distribution of prescription drugs.

(3) The board shall conduct a study to be completed no later than July 1, 2009, which shall include consultation with manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies responsible for the sale and distribution of prescription drug products in this state. Based on the results of the study, the board shall establish a mandated implementation date for electronic pedigrees which shall be no sooner than December 31, 2011, and may be extended by the board in one year increments if it appears the technology is not universally available across the entire prescription pharmaceutical supply; provided, however, that no provision of this article shall be effective until such time as the General Assembly appropriates reasonable funds for administration of this subsection. Effective at a date established by the board, pedigrees may be implemented through an approved and readily available system based on electronic track and trace pedigree technology. This electronic tracking system will be deemed to be readily available for use on a wide scale across the entire pharmaceutical supply chain which includes manufacturers, wholesale distributors, and pharmacies. Consideration must be given to the large-scale implementation of this technology across the supply chain and the technology must be proven to have no negative impact on the safety and efficacy of the pharmaceutical product.

(b) Each person in possession of a pedigree for a prescription drug who is engaged in the wholesale distribution of a prescription drug, including repackagers but excluding the original manufacturer of the finished form of the prescription drug and any entity engaged in the activities listed in paragraph (9) of Code Section 26-4-201, and who attempts to further distribute that prescription drug shall affirmatively verify before any distribution of a prescription drug occurs that each transaction listed on the pedigree has occurred.

(c) The pedigree shall include all necessary identifying information concerning each sale in the chain of distribution of the product from the

manufacturer, to acquisition and sale by any wholesale distributor or repackager, and to final sale to a pharmacy or other person dispensing or administering the prescription drug. At a minimum, the pedigree shall include:

(1) The name, address, telephone number, and, if available, e-mail address of each owner of the prescription drug and each wholesale distributor of the prescription drug;

(2) The name and address of each location from which the prescription drug was shipped, if different from the owner's;

(3) Transaction dates;

(4) Certification that each recipient, excluding retail or hospital pharmacies, has authenticated the pedigree;

(5) The name of the prescription drug;

(6) Dosage form and strength of the prescription drug;

(7) Size of the container;

(8) Number of containers;

(9) Lot number of the prescription drug; and

(10) The name of the manufacturer of the finished dosage form.

(d) Each pedigree shall be:

(1) Maintained by the wholesale distributor at its licensed location, unless given written authorization from the board to do otherwise, for three years from the date of sale or transfer; and

(2) Available for inspection, copying, or use at the licensed location upon a verbal request by the board or its designee.

(e) The board shall adopt rules and regulations, including a standard form, relating to the requirements of this article no later than 90 days after the effective date of this article.

(f) Pharmacies licensed pursuant to this chapter shall not be required to possess or maintain any pedigree issued pursuant to this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-202, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

26-4-203. [For effective date, see note.] Immediate cease and desist orders for violations.

- (a) If the board finds that there is a reasonable probability that:
- (1) A wholesale distributor, other than a manufacturer, has:
 - (A) Violated a provision of this article; or
 - (B) Falsified a pedigree, provided a falsified pedigree, or sold, distributed, transferred, manufactured, repackaged, handled, or held a counterfeit prescription drug intended for human use;
 - (2) The prescription drug at issue in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of this subsection could cause serious, adverse health consequences or death; and
 - (3) Other procedures would result in unreasonable delay,
- the board shall issue an order requiring the appropriate person including the distributors or retailers of the prescription drug to immediately cease distribution of the prescription drug in or to this state.
- (b) An order under subsection (a) of this Code section shall provide the person subject to the order with an opportunity for an informal hearing, to be held not later than ten calendar days after the date of the issuance of the order, on the actions required by the order. If, after such a hearing, the board determines that inadequate grounds exist to support the actions required by the order, the board shall vacate the order.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-203, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205.

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

26-4-204. [For effective date, see note.] Prohibited acts.

It shall be unlawful for a person to perform or cause the performance of or aid and abet any of the following acts in this state:

- (1) Selling, distributing, or transferring a prescription drug to a person that is not authorized to receive the prescription drug under the law of the jurisdiction in which the person receives the prescription drug;
- (2) Failing to maintain or provide pedigrees as required by the board;
- (3) Failing to obtain, transfer, or authenticate a pedigree as required by the board;

(4) Providing the board or any of its representatives or any federal official with false or fraudulent records, including, but not limited to falsified pedigrees, or making false or fraudulent statements regarding any matter within the provisions of this article;

(5) Obtaining or attempting to obtain a prescription drug by fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation or engaging in misrepresentation or fraud in the distribution of a prescription drug; and

(6) Except for the wholesale distribution by manufacturers of a prescription drug that has been delivered into commerce pursuant to an application approved under federal law by the Food and Drug Administration, the manufacturing, repackaging, selling, transferring, delivering, holding, or offering for sale of any prescription drug that is adulterated, misbranded, counterfeit, suspected of being counterfeit, or has otherwise been rendered unfit for distribution.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-204, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205.

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

26-4-205. [For effective date, see note.] Penalty.

(a) Notwithstanding Code Section 26-4-115, any person who engages without knowledge in the wholesale distribution of prescription drugs, including providing a falsified pedigree or other records, in violation of this article may be fined not more than \$10,000.00.

(b) If a person engages in wholesale distribution of prescription drugs in violation of this article, including providing a falsified pedigree or other records, and acts in a grossly negligent manner in violation of this article, the person may be punished by imprisonment for not more than 15 years, fined not more than \$50,000.00, or both.

(c) Notwithstanding Code Section 26-4-115, any person who knowingly engages in wholesale distribution of prescription drugs in violation of this article, including providing a falsified pedigree or other records, shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 25 years, by fine not to exceed \$500,000.00, or both.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-205, enacted by Ga. L. 2007, p. 463, § 2/SB 205.

of this Code section, see the delayed effective date note at the beginning of this article.

Editor's notes.

For information as to the effective date

ARTICLE 13

SAFE MEDICATIONS PRACTICE

26-4-210. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Safe Medications Practice Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-210, enacted by Ga. L. 2010, p. 195, § 1/HB 361.

Law reviews.

For article, “Off-Label Innovation,” see 56 Ga. L. Rev. 701 (2022).

26-4-211. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds and declares that:

(1) Medications are essential for the effective treatment and prevention of illness and disease, and medications, particularly dangerous drugs, are recognized to be complex chemical compounds which may cause untoward side effects, adverse reactions, and other undesirable and potentially harmful effects;

(2) Hospital pharmacists are highly trained in the therapeutic use of medications and have expertise in the safe, appropriate, and cost-effective use of medications; and

(3) Therefore, it is essential that physicians, pharmacists, and other clinical health care practitioners in an institutional setting collaborate to promote safe and effective medication therapy for the institution’s patients.

(b) The intent of the General Assembly in enacting this legislation is to maximize patient safety, to ensure safe and desirable medication therapy outcomes, and to achieve desired therapeutic goals.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-4-211, enacted by Ga. L. 2010, p. 195, § 1/HB 361.

26-4-212. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Collaborate” means to work jointly with others as approved by an order from a physician member of the institution’s medical staff for care and treatment of the ordering physician’s patients or pursuant to a protocol established in accordance with medical staff policy.

(2) “Hospital pharmacist” means a pharmacist that is employed by, or under contract with, an institution and practicing in an institutional setting.

(3) “Institution” means any licensed hospital, nursing home, assisted living community, personal care home, or hospice.

History. L. 2010, p. 195, § 1/HB 361; Ga. L. 2011, Code 1981, § 26-4-212, enacted by Ga. p. 227, § 9/SB 178.

26-4-213. Collaboration.

Hospital pharmacists shall be authorized to collaborate with members of the medical staff in an institution on drug therapy management.

History. Code 1981, § 26-4-213, enacted by Ga. L. 2010, p. 195, § 1/HB 361. Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, State Board of Pharmacy, Pharmacist Modification of Drug Therapy, Rule 480-35-.08.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Exception, Official Compilation of the

26-4-214. Role of State Board of Pharmacy and Georgia Composite Medical Board in establishing rules and regulations.

(a) The State Board of Pharmacy shall establish rules and regulations governing a hospital pharmacist acting pursuant to Code Section 26-4-213 in the provision of drug therapy management in institutions in consultation or collaboration with physicians. Such rules may include the utilization of a hospital pharmacist’s skills regarding dangerous drugs to promote medication safety. Such rules shall include the ordering of clinical laboratory tests in the institutional setting and the interpretation of results related to medication use when approved by a physician member of the institution’s medical staff for the care and treatment of the ordering physician’s patients or pursuant to a protocol established in accordance with medical staff policy.

(b) The Georgia Composite Medical Board shall establish rules and regulations governing a physician acting pursuant to this article.

History. Code 1981, § 26-4-214, enacted by Ga. L. 2010, p. 195, § 1/HB 361.

Cross references.

Georgia Composite Medical Board, § 43-34-1 et seq.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in 2010, “institution’s” was substituted for “institutions’s” in the last sentence of subsection (a).

CHAPTER 5

DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Article 1

General Provisions

Sec.	
26-5-1.	Short title.
26-5-2.	Legislative intent.
26-5-3.	Definitions.
26-5-4.	Classification of programs.
26-5-5.	Promulgation of minimum standards of quality and services for each class of programs.
26-5-6.	Promulgation of rules and regulations.
26-5-7.	License required.
26-5-8.	Application for license.
26-5-9.	Provisional licenses.
26-5-10.	Issuance of license; revocation or suspension.
26-5-11.	Conditions for issuance of license; nontransferability.
26-5-12.	Records of drug dependent persons treated or advised.
26-5-13.	Inspection of programs.
26-5-14.	Denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses.
26-5-15.	Notice of proposed denial, suspension, or revocation; hearing.
26-5-16.	Applicability of "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."
26-5-17.	Confidentiality of records, names, and communications.
26-5-18.	Injunctions; nuisances per se.
26-5-19.	Penalty.
26-5-20.	Priority admissions policy for drug dependent pregnant females.
26-5-21.	[Reserved] State Commission on Narcotic Treatment Programs; abolishment.
26-5-22.	Annual on-site inspections of narcotic treatment programs.
26-5-23.	Publication of annual report.

Article 2

Narcotic Treatment Programs Enforcement

Sec.	
26-5-40.	Short title.
26-5-41.	Definitions.
26-5-42.	Minimum standards of quality and services.
26-5-43.	Rules and regulations.
26-5-44.	License required.
26-5-45.	Application; proof of compliance.
26-5-46.	Application enrollment period; required letter of intent.
26-5-47.	Application review and requirements; nontransferability.
26-5-48.	Prerequisites to licensing; limits on licenses; waivers; creation of regions.
26-5-49.	Rewards and financial incentives prohibited.
26-5-50.	Compliance with zoning requirements.
26-5-51.	Providing of records.
26-5-52.	Inspections.
26-5-53.	Denial, suspension, or revocation of license.
26-5-54.	Notice.
26-5-55.	Actions subject to Administrative Procedures Act.
26-5-56.	Confidentiality of patient information.
26-5-57.	Enforcement.
26-5-58.	Penalty.
26-5-59.	Priority admissions policy for drug dependent pregnant females.
26-5-60.	Central registry.
26-5-61.	Records check application.
26-5-62.	Effectiveness of existing regulations.

Article 3

Prohibition on Patient Brokering

26-5-80.	Prohibited remunerations and acts; exemptions; penalties.

Cross references.

Hospitalization and treatment of alcoholics, drug dependent individuals, and drug abusers, § 37-7-1 et seq.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Programs, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regula-

tions of the State of Georgia, Department of Community Health, Healthcare Facility Regulation, Rule 111-8-19-.01 et seq.

Law reviews.

For comment, "Solving the Problem of Prenatal Substance Abuse: An Analysis of Punitive and Rehabilitative Approaches," see 39 Emory L.J. 1401 (1990).

ARTICLE 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Editor's notes.

The existing provisions of Chapter 5 (Code Sections 26-5-1 through 26-5-21)

were designated as Article 1 by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88, effective May 4, 2017.

26-5-1. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Act."

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 1; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

26-5-2. Legislative intent.

The purpose of this article is to provide for the classification and systematic evaluation of various programs designed for the treatment and therapeutic rehabilitation of drug dependent persons; to ensure that every governing body which operates a drug abuse treatment and education program is licensed to do so; and to meet the rehabilitative needs of drug dependent persons while safeguarding their individual liberties.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 2; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 1; Ga. L. 1991, p. 94, § 26; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

Law reviews.

For note, "The Diversion of Drug Abus-

ers from the Criminal Justice System: Georgia's Proposed Legislation," see 23 Emory L.J. 1071 (1974).

26-5-3. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Department” means the Department of Community Health or its successor.

(2) “Drug abuse treatment and education program” means any system of treatment or therapeutic advice or counsel provided for the rehabilitation of drug dependent persons and shall include programs offered in the following types of facilities:

(A) Residential care centers. A facility staffed by professional and paraprofessional persons offering treatment or therapeutic programs for drug dependent persons who live on the premises; and

(B) Nonresidential care centers. A non-live-in facility, staffed by professional and paraprofessional persons, offering treatment or therapeutic programs for drug dependent persons who do not live on the premises.

(3) “Drug dependent person” means a person who is in imminent danger of becoming dependent upon or addicted to the use of drugs or who habitually lacks self-control as to the use of drugs or who uses drugs to the extent that his health is substantially impaired or endangered or his social or economic function is substantially disrupted.

(4) “Drugs” means any substance defined as a drug by federal or Georgia law or any other chemical substance which may be used in lieu of a drug to obtain similar effects, with the exception of alcohol and its derivatives.

(5) “Governing body” means the county board of health, the partnership, the corporation, the association, or the person or group of persons who maintains and controls the program and who is legally responsible for the operation.

(6) “License” means the official permit issued by the director which authorizes the holder to operate a drug abuse treatment and education program for the term provided therein.

(7) “Licensee” means any person holding a license issued by the director under this article.

(8) “Program” means the drug abuse treatment and education program.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 3; Ga. L. 1982, p. 1991, p. 94, § 26; Ga. L. 2009, p. 453, § 1-4/HB 228; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 3, § 26; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 2; Ga. L. 88.

26-5-4. Classification of programs.

The department is authorized to classify all programs within the state according to the character and range of services provided.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 4; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 3.

26-5-5. Promulgation of minimum standards of quality and services for each class of programs.

The department shall create and promulgate minimum standards of quality and services for each designated class of programs. At least the following areas shall be covered in the rules and regulations:

- (1) Adequate and safe buildings or housing facilities where programs are offered;
- (2) Adequate equipment for the delivery of programs;
- (3) Sufficient trained or experienced staff who are competent in the duties they are to perform;
- (4) The content and quality of services to be provided;
- (5) Requirements for intake, discharge, and aftercare of drug dependent persons;
- (6) Referral to other appropriate agencies;
- (7) Continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of programs;
- (8) Maintenance of adequate records on each drug dependent person treated or advised;
- (9) A formal plan of cooperation with other programs in the state to allow for continuity of care for drug dependent persons; and
- (10) Criteria for providing priority in access to services and admissions to programs for drug dependent pregnant females.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 5; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 4; Ga. L. 1991, p. 94, § 26; Ga. L. 1991, p. 977, § 1.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 17.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 148 et seq.

26-5-6. Promulgation of rules and regulations.

The department is authorized and directed to create and promulgate

all rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 12; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 5; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 17.

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 148 et seq.

26-5-7. License required.

No governing body shall operate a drug abuse treatment and education program without having a valid license or provisional license issued pursuant to this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 6; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 6; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

Am. Jur. 2d.

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits, §§ 9, 46.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, §§ 50, 59.

ALR.

Right to enjoin business competitor

from unlicensed or otherwise illegal acts or practices, 90 A.L.R.2d 7.

Single or isolated transactions as falling within provisions of commercial or occupational licensing requirements, 93 A.L.R.2d 90.

26-5-8. Application for license.

(a) Application for a license to operate a program shall be submitted by the governing authority to the department in the manner prescribed by rules and regulations and shall contain a comprehensive outline of the program to be offered by the applicant.

(b) Proof of compliance with all applicable federal and state laws for the handling and dispensing of drugs and all state and local health, safety, sanitation, building, and zoning codes shall be attached to the application submitted to the department.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, §§ 7, 8; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 7.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits,
§§ 48, 50, 52.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 73 et seq.

26-5-9. Provisional licenses.

The department may issue a provisional license effective for a period not to exceed 90 days to each applicant who has substantially complied with all requirements for a regular license. Provisional licenses shall be renewed in the discretion of the department only in cases of extreme hardship and in no case for longer than 90 days. The obligations and conditions of a provisional license shall be the same as those of a regular license except as otherwise provided for in this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 9; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 8; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

26-5-10. Issuance of license; revocation or suspension.

The department may, upon submission of an application, with proof of accreditation by a voluntary accreditation agency approved by the department, issue a license based upon the findings of the accreditation agency. The license may be issued without an on-site visit by the department representative. Any denial, suspension, or revocation of the voluntary accreditation agency shall result in an automatic revocation or suspension of the license issued under this Code section, and the holder must apply for a new license as provided for in this article.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 10; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 9; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

26-5-11. Conditions for issuance of license; nontransferability.

The department shall issue a license to a governing body for any program which meets all the rules and regulations for the class of license applied for. The license shall be nontransferable for a change of location or governing body.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 11; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 10.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits,
§§ 3, 65.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, §§ 59, 67 et seq.

26-5-12. Records of drug dependent persons treated or advised.

Subject to the limitations of Code Section 26-5-17, the department may require at reasonable intervals, and each licensee shall furnish copies of complete records of each drug dependent person treated or advised pursuant to a program.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 14; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 11; Ga. L. 1991, p. 94, § 26.

26-5-13. Inspection of programs.

Each licensee shall permit the authorized department representatives to enter upon and inspect any and all premises upon or in which a program is to be conducted or for which a license has been applied so that verification of compliance with all relevant laws or regulations can be made.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 15; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 12.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits,
§§ 48, 50, 52.

26-5-14. Denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses.

The department may deny any license applied for under this article that does not fulfill the minimum requirements which the department may prescribe by rules and regulations and may suspend or revoke a license which has been issued if an applicant or a licensee violates any of such rules and regulations; provided, however, that before any order is entered denying a license applied for or suspending or revoking a license previously granted, the applicant or license holder, as the case may be, shall be afforded an opportunity for a hearing as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act."

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 16; Ga. L. 1985, p.
476, § 13; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 3/SB 88.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

51 Am. Jur. 2d, Licenses and Permits,
§ 56 et seq.

C.J.S.

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 85 et seq.

26-5-15. Notice of proposed denial, suspension, or revocation; hearing.

Notice of a proposed denial, suspension, or revocation of a license shall be provided in writing by the department to any licensee so affected within 90 days after the application is filed or the grounds are discovered. Within ten days from receipt of such notice, the licensee so affected may request a hearing before the department. Upon receipt of such request for hearing in proper form, the department shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable time, but not later than 90 days.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 17; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 14.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**C.J.S.**

53 C.J.S., Licenses, § 85 et seq.

26-5-16. Applicability of “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

The promulgation of rules and regulations, the conduct of administrative hearings, and judicial review of the department’s actions shall be subject to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 13; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 15.

RESEARCH REFERENCES**Am. Jur. 2d.**

63C Am. Jur. 2d, Public Officers and Employees, § 221 et seq.

26-5-17. Confidentiality of records, names, and communications.

For the purpose of providing more effective treatment and rehabilitation, the records and name of any drug dependent person who seeks or obtains treatment, therapeutic advice, or counsel from any program licensed under this article shall be confidential and shall not be

revealed except to the extent authorized in writing by the drug dependent person affected; furthermore, any communication by such drug dependent person to an authorized employee of any holder of a license shall be deemed confidential; provided, however, that, except for matters privileged under other laws of this state, the records of such person and information about such person shall be produced in response to a valid court order of any court of competent jurisdiction after a full and fair show-cause hearing and in response to a departmental request for access for licensing purposes when such request is accompanied by a written statement that no record of patient identifying information will be made.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 18; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 16; Ga. L. 1986, p. 10, § 26; Ga. L. 1991, p. 94, § 26; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

Law reviews.

For comment, "The Psychotherapist-Client Testimonial Privilege: Defining the Professional Involved," see 34 Emory L.J. 777 (1985).

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Admission of documents pursuant to court order. — Admission of records relating to a mother's drug treatment, which were admitted pursuant to the or-

der of the juvenile court after a full and fair show-cause hearing, was not an abuse of discretion. In re L.H., 236 Ga. App. 132, 511 S.E.2d 253.

26-5-18. Injunctions; nuisances per se.

The department is authorized to enforce this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article by injunction. Any violation of this article or any rule or regulation promulgated under this article shall be a nuisance per se; and it shall not be necessary to allege or prove the exhaustion of remedies at law to obtain an injunction under this Code section.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 19; Ga. L. 1985, p. 476, § 17; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

RESEARCH REFERENCES

C.J.S.

73 C.J.S., Public Administrative Law and Procedure, § 226. 73A C.J.S., Public

Administrative Law and Procedure, § 355.

26-5-19. Penalty.

Any person who violates this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Ga. L. 1972, p. 714, § 20; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

26-5-20. Priority admissions policy for drug dependent pregnant females.

Any program licensed or funded by the department under this article shall implement a priority admissions policy for the treatment of drug dependent pregnant females which provides for immediate access to services for any such female applying for admission, which access shall be contingent only upon the availability of space.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-20, enacted by Ga. L. 1991, p. 977, § 2; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88.

1993, a comma was inserted following the word “admission” near the end of this Code section.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-5-21. [Reserved] State Commission on Narcotic Treatment Programs; abolishment.**History.**

Code 1981, § 26-5-21, enacted by Ga. L. 2016, p. 157, § 2/SB 402; Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 2/SB 88; Ga. L. 2022, p. 352, § 26/HB 1428.

Editor’s notes.

Ga. L. 2022, p. 352, § 26/HB 1428 repealed and reserved this Code section, effective May 2, 2022.

26-5-22. Annual on-site inspections of narcotic treatment programs.

The authorized department shall conduct an annual on-site inspection of each narcotic treatment program licensed in this state. Such inspection shall include, but shall not be limited to, the premises, staff, persons in care, and documents pertinent to the continued licensing of such narcotic treatment program so that the department may determine whether a provider is operating in compliance with licensing requirements.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-22, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 319, § 5-1/HB 249; Ga. L. 2018, p. 1112, § 26/SB 365.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2017 enactment of this Code section, see 34 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 143 (2017).

26-5-23. Publication of annual report.

The Department of Community Health and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities shall publish an annual report using data from the department’s central registry data base on the number of patients in enrolled treatment, the number of patients discharged from treatment, each patient’s state of residence, and other information determined by the departments. Such published report shall exclude patient identifying information and be compliant with state and federal laws.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-23, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 319, § 5-1/HB 249; Ga. L. 2018, p. 1112, § 26/SB 365; Ga. L. 2019, p. 1056, § 26/SB 52.

Law reviews.

For article on the 2017 enactment of this Code section, see 34 Ga. St. U.L. Rev. 143 (2017).

ARTICLE 2

NARCOTIC TREATMENT PROGRAMS ENFORCEMENT

Administrative rules and regulations.

Rules and Regulations for Narcotic Treatment Programs, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Department of Community Health, Healthcare Facility Regulation, Rule 111-8-53-.01 et seq.

Opioid Treatment Program Clinic Pharmacies, Official Compilation of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, State Board of Pharmacy, Rule 480-18-.01 et seq.

26-5-40. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Narcotic Treatment Programs Enforcement Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-40, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-41. Definitions.

As used in this article, the term:

(1) “Department” means the Department of Community Health or its successor.

(2) “Governing body” means the county board of health, the partnership, the corporation, the association, or the person or group of persons who maintains and controls a narcotic treatment program, who is legally responsible for its operation, and who holds the license to operate that program.

(3) “License” means the official permit issued by the department that authorizes the holder to operate a narcotic treatment program for the term provided therein.

(4) “Licensee” means any person holding a license issued by the department under this article.

(5) “Narcotic treatment program” means any system of treatment provided for chronic heroin or opiate-like drug-dependent individuals that administers narcotic drugs under physicians’ orders either for detoxification purposes or for maintenance treatment in a rehabilitative context offered by any county board of health, partnership,

corporation, association, or person or groups of persons engaged in such administration.

(6) "Patient" means any individual who undergoes treatment in a narcotic treatment program.

History. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88; Ga. L. 2018, p. Code 1981, § 26-5-41, enacted by Ga. L. 1112, § 26/SB 365.

26-5-42. Minimum standards of quality and services.

The department shall create and promulgate reasonable and necessary minimum standards of quality and services for narcotic treatment programs. At least the following areas shall be covered in the rules and regulations:

- (1) Adequate and safe buildings or housing facilities where programs are offered;
- (2) Adequate equipment for the delivery of programs;
- (3) Sufficient trained or experienced staff who are competent in the duties they are to perform;
- (4) The content and quality of services to be provided;
- (5) Requirements for intake, discharge, and aftercare of drug dependent persons;
- (6) Referral to other appropriate agencies;
- (7) Continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of programs;
- (8) Maintenance of adequate records on each drug dependent person treated or advised;
- (9) A formal plan of cooperation with other programs in the state to allow for continuity of care for drug dependent persons; and
- (10) Criteria for providing priority in access to services and admissions to programs for drug dependent pregnant females.

History. Code 1981, § 26-5-42, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-43. Rules and regulations.

The department is authorized and directed to create and promulgate all rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-43, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-44. License required.

No governing body shall operate a narcotic treatment program without having a valid license or provisional license issued pursuant to this article.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-44, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-45. Application; proof of compliance.

(a) Application for a license to operate a narcotic treatment program shall be submitted by the governing body to the department in the manner prescribed by rules and regulations and shall contain a comprehensive outline of the program to be offered by the applicant.

(b) Proof of compliance with all applicable federal and state laws for the handling and dispensing of drugs and all state and local health, safety, sanitation, building, and zoning codes shall be attached to the narcotic treatment application submitted to the department.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-45, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-46. Application enrollment period; required letter of intent.

(a) The department shall establish an annual or biannual open enrollment period to accept applications for narcotic treatment programs.

(b) The department shall establish an information forum for potential applicants prior to the beginning of the open enrollment period that shall be no less than 14 days prior to the start of the open enrollment period. It shall be mandatory for a representative of a prospective applicant for such open enrollment period to attend the information forum. Failure to attend and comply with such record of attendance requirements shall disqualify any applicant from consideration during open enrollment.

(c) It shall be mandatory for an applicant to submit a letter of intent stating such applicant's intention to apply for a narcotic treatment program license. Such letter of intent shall include the intended address and region location. The letter shall be delivered to the

department at least seven days prior to the beginning of the open enrollment period.

(d) The first open enrollment period shall be held December 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017, and the department shall not accept any applications for licensure until December 1, 2017.

(e) After the first open enrollment period, the department shall administratively determine the annual or biannual open enrollment period no later than December 1 of the preceding calendar year.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-46, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS

Proposed clinic lacked standing to challenge restrictions. — LLC that had made preliminary plans to operate a methadone clinic lacked standing to challenge O.C.G.A. §§ 26-5-21 (now repealed) and 26-5-46, laws restricting licensure of narcotic treatment facilities, in part because the restrictions had expired and in

part because the LLC had no concrete plan in place for bringing the LLC's proposed clinic into operation; the LLC's claims of lost profits and additional expenses were speculative. *Aaron Private Clinic Mgmt. LLC v. Berry*, 912 F.3d 1330, 2019 U.S. App. LEXIS 278 (11th Cir. 2019).

26-5-47. Application review and requirements; nontransferability.

(a) The department shall, consistent with the requirements of this Code section, establish an application review process committee. The members of the committee shall include representation from department staff members and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

(b) Application requirements shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Data and details regarding treatment and counseling plans;
- (2) Biographical information and qualifications of owners, medical directors, counselors, and other required staff;

(3) Data as determined by the department on currently licensed narcotic treatment programs within the region of the proposed location and within a 75 mile radius, whether or not such other programs are outside of the region;

(4) Patient levels of currently licensed programs in the proposed region of care and within 75 miles, including:

- (A) The number of patients admitted to current narcotic treatment programs in the most recent month; and

(B) The number of patients served by current narcotic treatment programs in the most recent month;

(5) Data on demographic, social, health, economic, alcohol and drug related crimes, alcohol and drug overdoses, and hospital and emergency department admissions of individuals addicted to opioids for the program location;

(6) Applicant experience operating a narcotic treatment program or working at such program, including a complete history of such experience both within this state and in any other state;

(7) Program ownership in other locations, if any, including a complete and accurate description of narcotic treatment program experience, including whether the applicant currently holds, has held, or has had revoked any licenses, registrations, enrollments, accreditations, contracts, and network memberships. The applicant shall disclose any adverse actions against the applicant while employed by or as a result of ownership of a narcotic treatment program;

(8) Evidence the applicant sought community input for the proposed location from substance abuse advocacy organizations, civic organizations, neighborhood associations, locally elected officials, and other groups;

(9) Proof of notification of intent to file an application with all law enforcement offices within a 25 mile radius of the program location;

(10) Proof of notification of intent to file an application with all drug courts within a 75 mile radius of the program location;

(11) A narrative description of and information about adjoining businesses and occupancies within 200 feet of the facility, including a description of transportation access, traffic patterns, security features, local area police and crime reports, and neighborhood safety; and

(12) A complete description of the facility's staff and patient parking.

(c)(1) A program license shall be nontransferable for a change of a governing body. The department shall require currently operating programs that have a change of governing body to submit an application for such change in accordance with its rules and regulations. However, the department shall waive Code Section 26-5-46, all other requirements under this Code section, and Code Section 26-5-48 if such governing body is in good standing with the department.

(2) A program license shall be nontransferable for a change of location. The department shall require currently operating programs

that have a change of location to submit an application for such change in accordance with its rules and regulations. However, the department shall waive the application requirements for a change of location of a currently operating program pursuant to Code Section 26-5-46, all other requirements under this Code section, and Code Section 26-5-48 if such governing body is in good standing with the department, provided the change of location is within such program's current region established by this article.

(d) Upon application for an additional program by a current licensee, each location operated by such licensee shall be inspected. Any such location inspected within the preceding 36 months shall be exempt from such inspection requirement of this subsection. Such inspections are in addition to all other application requirements for an additional program application by such licensee.

(e) In the event an applicant is unable to obtain patient information from current programs as required by subsection (b) of this Code section, the department may direct current narcotic treatment programs to provide such information to the applicant.

History. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88; Ga. L. 2018, p. Code 1981, § 26-5-47, enacted by Ga. L. 1112, § 26/SB 365.

26-5-48. Prerequisites to licensing; limits on licenses; waivers; creation of regions.

(a) Prior to the department issuing a license to a governing body for any narcotic treatment program, the program shall demonstrate the following:

- (1) Compliance with all state and federal law and regulations;
- (2) Compliance with all applicable standards of practice;
- (3) Program structure for successful service delivery; and

(4) Impact on the delivery of opioid treatment services of the applicant in the applicable population.

(b) The department shall issue a license to a governing body for any narcotic treatment program which meets all the rules and regulations for such program and the licensing of such program does not exceed four licensed treatment programs per region pursuant to subsection (h) of this Code section.

(c) The department will evaluate the applications based on data submitted as required by Code Section 26-5-47.

(d) Applications for licensure submitted to the department prior to June 1, 2016, shall not be subject to Code Section 26-5-46 or 26-5-47.

(e) Programs licensed on or before June 30, 2017, are not subject to the regional maximum allowable program limitations pursuant to this Code section. However, if a region has four or more licensed programs on or after July 1, 2017, such region shall be considered to have reached its maximum allowable programs.

(f) The department shall establish a review process to determine if a waiver should be granted to an applicant and allow an application to be submitted for review in a region that has four or more licensed narcotic treatment programs. The department shall have full authority to determine the requirements that must be met for a waiver to be considered for review.

(g) In the event that the department receives multiple letters of intent before an open enrollment period for a specific region and the ensuing applications will lead to the regional license limit being exceeded, the department shall have the authority to develop a scoring system for the applications submitted and approve a program or programs determined to be most fit for licensure. The department shall develop an appeal process for those applications not selected under such scoring system.

(h) For the purpose of narcotic treatment program application evaluation for the department and delivery of services by narcotic treatment programs in communities and to citizens of this state and for the purpose of establishing narcotic treatment programs regional boundaries, there are created 49 regions with those counties designated as follows:

(1) Region 1 shall be composed of Dade, Catoosa, Walker, and Chattooga counties;

(2) Region 2 shall be composed of Whitfield and Murray counties;

(3) Region 3 shall be composed of Gordon and Bartow counties;

(4) Region 4 shall be composed of Floyd County;

(5) Region 5 shall be composed of Polk and Haralson counties;

(6) Region 6 shall be composed of Paulding County;

(7) Region 7 shall be composed of Cobb County;

(8) Region 8 shall be composed of Douglas County;

(9) Region 9 shall be composed of Fulton County;

(10) Region 10 shall be composed of Cherokee County;

(11) Region 11 shall be composed of Forsyth County;

(12) Region 12 shall be composed of Fannin, Gilmer, and Pickens counties;

(13) Region 13 shall be composed of Towns, Union, Lumpkin, and White counties;

(14) Region 14 shall be composed of Rabun, Habersham, and Stephens counties;

(15) Region 15 shall be composed of Hart, Franklin, Elbert, Oglethorpe, and Madison counties;

(16) Region 16 shall be composed of Banks, Jackson, and Barrow counties;

(17) Region 17 shall be composed of Hall and Dawson counties;

(18) Region 18 shall be composed of Gwinnett County;

(19) Region 19 shall be composed of DeKalb County;

(20) Region 20 shall be composed of Clayton County;

(21) Region 21 shall be composed of Henry County;

(22) Region 22 shall be composed of Rockdale County;

(23) Region 23 shall be composed of Clarke and Oconee counties;

(24) Region 24 shall be composed of Walton and Newton counties;

(25) Region 25 shall be composed of Wilkes, Lincoln, Taliaferro, McDuffie, Warren, and Glascock counties;

(26) Region 26 shall be composed of Columbia, Richmond, and Burke counties;

(27) Region 27 shall be composed of Greene, Morgan, Hancock, Putnam, Jasper, Jones, Baldwin, and Wilkinson counties;

(28) Region 28 shall be composed of Butts, Lamar, and Monroe counties;

(29) Region 29 shall be composed of Fayette, Spalding, Pike, and Upson counties;

(30) Region 30 shall be composed of Carroll, Heard, Troup, Coweta, and Meriwether counties;

(31) Region 31 shall be composed of Muscogee, Harris, Talbot, Taylor, Marion, and Chattahoochee counties;

(32) Region 32 shall be composed of Bibb, Crawford, and Twiggs counties;

(33) Region 33 shall be composed of Houston and Peach counties;

(34) Region 34 shall be composed of Laurens, Johnson, and Treutlen counties;

(35) Region 35 shall be composed of Washington, Jefferson, Emanuel, Candler, and Toombs counties;

(36) Region 36 shall be composed of Jenkins, Screven, Bulloch, and Effingham counties;

(37) Region 37 shall be composed of Chatham County;

(38) Region 38 shall be composed of Bryan, Liberty, McIntosh, Long, Tattnall, and Evans counties;

(39) Region 39 shall be composed of Glynn, Camden, Wayne, Appling, and Jeff Davis counties;

(40) Region 40 shall be composed of Dodge, Telfair, Montgomery, Wheeler, Bleckley, and Pulaski counties;

(41) Region 41 shall be composed of Charlton, Ware, Brantley, Pierce, Bacon, and Coffee counties;

(42) Region 42 shall be composed of Clinch, Atkinson, Lanier, Berrien, and Cook counties;

(43) Region 43 shall be composed of Lowndes, Colquitt, Echols, Brooks, and Thomas counties;

(44) Region 44 shall be composed of Tift, Turner, Irwin, and Worth counties;

(45) Region 45 shall be composed of Dooly, Crisp, Ben Hill, and Wilcox counties;

(46) Region 46 shall be composed of Dougherty County;

(47) Region 47 shall be composed of Lee, Sumter, Macon, Schley, Webster, and Stewart counties;

(48) Region 48 shall be composed of Calhoun, Baker, Mitchell, Decatur, and Grady counties; and

(49) Region 49 shall be composed of Terrell, Randolph, Quitman, Clay, Early, Miller, and Seminole counties.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-48, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-49. Rewards and financial incentives prohibited.

(a) Narcotic treatment programs shall not provide a bounty, free services, free medication, or other rewards for patient referral to such program.

(b) Narcotic treatment programs shall not provide temporary dis-

counted financial incentives to a potential patient that does not conform to the schedule of fees established by such program as required by the department's rules and regulations.

(c) Narcotic treatment programs shall not provide discounted fees for services during the first 90 days of treatment.

(d) Subsections (b) and (c) of this Code section shall not apply to drug dependent pregnant females.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-49, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-50. Compliance with zoning requirements.

Narcotic treatment programs shall fully comply with local zoning requirements.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-50, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-51. Providing of records.

Subject to the limitations of Code Section 26-5-56, the department may require at reasonable intervals that each licensee shall furnish copies of complete records of each person treated or advised by the narcotic treatment program; provided, however, that patient identifying information shall be redacted from such records prior to submission to the department.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-51, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-52. Inspections.

Each licensee shall permit the authorized department representatives to enter upon and inspect any and all premises upon or in which a program is to be conducted or for which a license has been applied so that verification of compliance with all relevant laws or regulations can be made.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-52, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-53. Denial, suspension, or revocation of license.

The department may deny any license applied for under this article that does not fulfill the minimum requirements which the department

shall prescribe by rules and regulations and may suspend or revoke a license which has been issued if an applicant or a licensee violates any of such rules and regulations; provided, however, that before any order is entered denying a license applied for or suspending or revoking a license previously granted, the applicant or licensee, as the case may be, shall be afforded an opportunity for a hearing as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-53, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-54. Notice.

Notice of a proposed suspension or revocation of a license shall be provided in writing by the department to any licensee so affected within 90 days after the open enrollment period has closed or the grounds are discovered. Within ten days from receipt of such notice, the licensee so affected may request a hearing before the department. Upon receipt of such request for hearing in proper form, the department shall schedule a hearing within a reasonable time, but not later than 90 days.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-54, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-55. Actions subject to Administrative Procedures Act.

The promulgation of reasonable and necessary rules and regulations, the conduct of administrative hearings, and judicial review of the department's actions shall be subject to Chapter 13 of Title 50, the “Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.”

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-55, enacted by Ga. L.
2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-56. Confidentiality of patient information.

For the purpose of providing more effective treatment and rehabilitation, the records and name of any drug dependent person who seeks or obtains treatment, therapeutic advice, or counsel from any program licensed under this chapter shall be confidential and shall not be revealed except to the extent authorized in writing by the drug dependent person affected; furthermore, any communication by such drug dependent person to an authorized employee of any holder of a license shall be deemed confidential; provided, however, that, except for matters privileged under other laws of this state, the records of such person and information about such person shall be produced in response to a valid court order of any court of competent jurisdiction after

a full and fair show-cause hearing and in response to a departmental request for access for licensing purposes when such request is accompanied by a written statement that no record of patient identifying information will be made.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-56, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-57. Enforcement.

The department is authorized to enforce this article and the rules and regulations promulgated under this article by injunction. Any violation of this article or any rule or regulation promulgated under this article shall be a nuisance per se; and it shall not be necessary to allege or prove the exhaustion of remedies at law to obtain an injunction under this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-57, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-58. Penalty.

Any person who violates any provision of this article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-58, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-59. Priority admissions policy for drug dependent pregnant females.

Any program licensed or funded by the department under this article shall implement a priority admissions policy for the treatment of drug dependent pregnant females which provides for immediate access to services for any such female applying for admission, which access shall be contingent only upon the availability of space.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-59, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

26-5-60. Central registry.

To prevent simultaneous enrollment of a patient in more than one program, all programs shall comply with the policies and participate in the central registry operated by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. Programs shall comply with the rules and regulations of the department regarding the central registry.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-60, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

Administrative rules and regulations.

Central Registry, Official Compilation of

the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Department of Community Health, Healthcare Facility Regulation, Rules and Regulations for Narcotic Treatment Programs, Rule 111-8-53-.19.

26-5-61. Records check application.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “Administrator” means the individual designated by the program’s governing body who is responsible for the on-going and day-to-day operations of the program, for overall compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding the operation of narcotic treatment programs, and for all program employees including practitioners, agents, or other persons providing services at the program.

(2) “Applicant” means any individual affiliated with a partnership, corporation, association or individuals or groups of individuals submitting an application to operate a narcotic treatment program under this article.

(3) “Conviction” means a finding or verdict of guilty or a plea of guilty regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought.

(4) “Criminal record” means any of the following:

(A) Conviction of a crime;

(B) Arrest, charge, and sentencing for a crime where:

(i) A plea of nolo contendere was entered to the charge;

(ii) First offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; or

(iii) Adjudication or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge; or

(C) Arrest and being charged for a crime if the charge is pending, unless the time for prosecuting such crime has expired pursuant to Chapter 3 of Title 17.

(5) “GCIC” means the Georgia Crime Information Center established under Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 35.

(6) “GCIC information” means criminal history record information as defined in Code Section 35-3-30.

(7) “Program” means a narcotic treatment program required to be licensed under this article.

(8) "Records check application" means fingerprints in such form and of such quality as prescribed by the Georgia Crime Information Center and under standards adopted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a records search fee to be established by the department by rule and regulation, payable in such form as the department may direct to cover the cost of obtaining criminal background information pursuant to this Code section.

(b)(1) Prior to approving any license for a new program and periodically as established by the department by rules and regulations, the department shall require an administrator and applicant to submit a records check application. The department shall establish a uniform method of obtaining an administrator's and applicant's records check application.

(2)(A) Unless the department contracts pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, the department shall transmit to the GCIC the fingerprints and records search fee from each fingerprint records check application in accordance with Code Section 35-3-35. Upon receipt thereof, the GCIC shall promptly transmit the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a search of bureau records and an appropriate report and shall promptly conduct a search of its records and records to which it has access. Within ten days after receiving fingerprints acceptable to the GCIC and the fee, the GCIC shall notify the department in writing of any criminal record or if there is no such finding. After a search of Federal Bureau of Investigation records and fingerprints and upon receipt of the bureau's report, the department shall make a determination about an administrator's and applicant's criminal record and shall notify the administrator or applicant in writing as to the department's determination as to whether such administrator or applicant has or does not have a criminal record.

(B) The department may either perform criminal background checks under agreement with the GCIC or contract with the GCIC and appropriate law enforcement agencies which have access to the GCIC and the Federal Bureau of Investigation information to have those agencies perform for the department criminal background checks for administrators and applicants. The department or the appropriate law enforcement agencies may charge reasonable fees for performing criminal background checks.

(3) The department's determination regarding an administrator's or an applicant's criminal record, or any action by the department revoking or refusing to grant a license based on such determination, shall constitute a contested case for purposes of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the "Georgia Administrative Procedure Act," except that any

hearing required to be held pursuant thereto may be held reasonably expeditiously after such determination or action by the department.

(4) Neither the GCIC, the department, any law enforcement agency, nor the employees of any such entities shall be responsible for the accuracy of information nor have any liability for defamation, invasion of privacy, negligence, or any other claim in connection with any dissemination of information or determination based thereon pursuant to this Code section.

(c) All information received from the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the GCIC shall be for the exclusive purpose of approving or denying the granting of a license to a new program and shall not be released or otherwise disclosed to any other person or agency. All such information collected by the department shall be maintained by the department pursuant to laws regarding and the rules or regulations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the GCIC, as is applicable. Penalties for the unauthorized release or disclosure of any such information shall be as prescribed pursuant to laws regarding and rules or regulations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the GCIC, as is applicable.

(d) The requirements of this Code section are supplemental to any requirements for a license application or other requirements imposed by this article.

(e) The department shall promulgate written rules and regulations reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this Code section.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-61, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

2017, paragraphs (a)(5), (a)(6) and (a)(7) were arranged in alphabetical order.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

26-5-62. Effectiveness of existing regulations.

Unless otherwise provided, this article shall not invalidate or affect any rules or regulations which were in effect on May 4, 2017, promulgated pursuant to authority given by law, and such rules and regulations shall remain in force until repealed, replaced, or invalidated.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-62, enacted by Ga. L. 2017, p. 307, § 1/SB 88.

2017, “on May 4, 2017,” was substituted for “upon its effective date,” in this Code section.

Code Commission notes.

Pursuant to Code Section 28-9-5, in

ARTICLE 3
PROHIBITION ON PATIENT BROKERING

Effective date.

This article became effective July 1, 2021.

26-5-80. Prohibited remunerations and acts; exemptions; penalties.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) “Health care provider” means:

(A) Any person licensed under Chapter 9, 10A, 11, 11A, 26, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 39, or 44 of Title 43 or any hospital, nursing home, home health agency, institution, or medical facility licensed or defined under Chapter 7 of Title 31. Such term shall also include any corporation, professional corporation, partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, authority, or other entity composed of such health care providers; and

(B) A substance abuse provider.

(2) “Health care provider network entity” means a corporation, professional corporation, partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, or authority owned or operated by two or more health care providers and organized for the purpose of entering into agreements with health insurers, health care purchasing groups, Medicaid, or Medicare.

(3) “Health insurer” means an accident and sickness insurer, health care corporation, health maintenance organization, or provider sponsored health care corporation or any similar entity regulated by the Commissioner of Insurance.

(4) “Recovery residence” means a residential dwelling unit, or other form of group housing, that is offered or advertised through any means, including oral, written, electronic, or printed means, by any person or entity as a residence that provides a peer supported, alcohol-free, and drug-free living environment.

(5) “Substance abuse provider” means:

(A) Any state owned or state operated hospital, community mental health center, or other facility utilized for the diagnosis, care, treatment, or hospitalization of persons who are alcoholics, drug dependent individuals, or drug abusers, and any other hospital or facility within the State of Georgia approved for such purposes by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities;

(B) Any community service provider contracting with any state or local entity to furnish mental health, developmental disability, and addictive disease services;

(C) Any drug abuse treatment and education program and narcotic treatment program licensed under this chapter; and

(D) Any recovery residence.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person, including any substance abuse provider, to:

(1) Pay or offer to pay any remuneration, including, but not limited to, a commission, benefit, bonus, rebate, kickback, or bribe, directly or indirectly, in cash or in kind, or engage in any split-fee arrangement, in any form, to induce the referral of a patient or patronage to or from a substance abuse provider;

(2) Solicit or receive any remuneration, including, but not limited to, a commission, benefit, bonus, rebate, kickback, or bribe, directly or indirectly, in cash or in kind, or engage in any split-fee arrangement, in any form, in return for the referral of a patient or patronage to or from a substance abuse provider;

(3) Solicit or receive any remuneration, including, but not limited to, a commission, benefit, bonus, rebate, kickback, or bribe, directly or indirectly, in cash or in kind, or engage in any split-fee arrangement, in any form, in return for the acceptance or acknowledgment of treatment from a substance abuse provider; or

(4) Aid, abet, advise, or otherwise participate in the conduct prohibited by paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subsection.

(c) This Code section shall not apply to:

(1) Any discount, payment, waiver of payment, or payment practice not prohibited by 42 U.S.C. Section 1320a-7b(b) or its corresponding federal regulations regardless as to whether such discount, payment, waiver of payment, or payment practice involves a federal healthcare program; or any fraternal benefit society providing health benefits to its members as authorized pursuant to Chapter 15 of Title 33;

(2) Any payment, compensation, or financial arrangement within a group practice as defined in Code Section 43-1B-3, provided that such payment, compensation, or arrangement is not to or from persons who are not members of the group practice;

(3) Payments to a health care provider for professional services;

(4) Commissions, fees, or other remuneration lawfully paid to insurance agents as provided under Title 33;

(5) Payments by a health insurer that reimburses, provides, offers to provide, or administers health, mental health, or substance abuse goods or services under a health benefit plan;

(6) Payments to or by a health care provider or a health care provider network entity that has contracted with a health insurer, a health care purchasing group, or the Medicare or Medicaid program to provide health care, mental health, or substance abuse goods or services under a health benefit plan when such payments are for goods or services under the plan; provided, however, that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to affect whether a health care provider network entity is an insurer required to be licensed under Title 33;

(7) Insurance advertising gifts lawfully permitted under Code Section 33-6-4; or

(8) Payments by a substance abuse provider to a health care, mental health, or substance abuse information service that provides information upon request and without charge to consumers about providers of health care goods or services to enable consumers to select appropriate health care providers, provided that such information service:

(A) Does not attempt through its standard questions for solicitation of consumer criteria or through any other means to steer or lead a consumer to select or consider selection of a particular health care provider;

(B) Does not provide or represent itself as providing diagnostic or counseling services or assessments of illness or injury and does not make any promises of cure or guarantees of treatment;

(C) Does not provide or arrange for transportation of a consumer to or from the location of a health care provider; and

(D) Charges and collects fees from a health care provider participating in its services that are set in advance, are consistent with the fair market value for those information services, and are not based on the potential value of a patient or patients to a health care provider or of the goods or services provided by the health care provider.

(d)(1) Any person, including an officer, partner, agent, attorney, or other representative of a firm, joint venture, partnership, business trust, syndicate, corporation, or other business entity, who violates any provision of this Code section, when the prohibited conduct involves fewer than ten patients, commits a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 12 months and by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00 per violation.

(2) Any person, including an officer, partner, agent, attorney, or other representative of a firm, joint venture, partnership, business trust, syndicate, corporation, or other business entity, who violates any provision of this Code section, when the prohibited conduct involves ten or more patients but fewer than 20 patients, commits a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than five years and by a fine of not more than \$100,000.00 per violation.

(3) Any person, including an officer, partner, agent, attorney, or other representative of a firm, joint venture, partnership, business trust, syndicate, corporation, or other business entity, who violates any provision of this Code section, when the prohibited conduct involves 20 or more patients, commits a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than ten years and by a fine of not more than \$500,000.00 per violation.

(e) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the Attorney General or district attorney of the judicial circuit in which any part of the violation occurred may maintain an action for injunctive relief or other process to enforce the provisions of this Code section.

(f) For prosecutions under this Code section, venue shall be proper in any county in this state where any act was committed in furtherance of the unlawful conduct.

(g) The party bringing an action under this Code section may recover reasonable expenses in obtaining injunctive relief, including, but not limited to, investigative costs, court costs, reasonable attorney's fees, witness costs, and deposition expenses.

(h) The provisions of this Code section are in addition to any other civil, administrative, or criminal actions provided by law and may be imposed against both corporate and individual defendants.

History.

Code 1981, § 26-5-80, enacted by Ga. L. 2021, p. 436, § 1/SB 4.

OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Fingerprinting required. — Misdemeanor offenses arising under O.C.G.A. § 26-5-80(b) are offenses for which those charged are to be fingerprinted. 2021 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 21-1.

Index

A

ABATTOIRS.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants.

General provisions, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Included in definition, §26-2-200.

ACADEMIES.

Georgia fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

ACCIDENTS.

Amusement ride accident reports, §25-15-61.

Carnival ride accident reports, §25-15-91.

Reports.

Amusement ride safety, §25-15-61.

Carnival ride safety, §25-15-91.

ACTING IN CONCERT.

Blasting standards act of 1978.

Injunctions restraining persons acting in concert, §25-8-11.

ACTIONS.

Amusement Ride Safety Act.

State not liable under chapter, §25-15-68.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Civil penalties for violations, §25-15-31.

State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Carnival Ride Safety Act.

State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Cigarette fire safety.

Enforcement of violations, §25-14-6.

Commonsense consumption act.

Weight gain or obesity from long-term consumption of food.

Nonliability of food manufacturers, packers, seller, distributors, etc., §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Enforcement of provisions, §25-12-18.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Enforcement of chapter, §25-11-16.

ACTIONS —Cont'd

Food manufacturers, distributors, sellers, packers, etc.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability for weight gain or obesity, §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

Obesity.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers, packers, sellers, distributors, etc., §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Third-party prescription programs.

Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Prescriptions.

Third-party prescription programs.

Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Third-party prescription programs.

Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Weight gain.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers, packers, sellers, distributors, etc., §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

ADAPTERS.

Fire departments.

Equipment requirements, §25-3-23.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE.

Contested cases.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Board disciplinary proceedings.

Applicability of due process and contested case requirements, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Applicability, §26-5-16.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Enforcement of provisions, §25-11-16.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Board disciplinary proceedings.

Applicability of due process and contested case requirements, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

ADULTERATION.

Drug and cosmetic act.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

INDEX

ADULTERATION —Cont'd

Food adulteration and misbranding.

General provisions, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Meat inspections, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Definition of adulteration, §26-2-62.

Detention of meat, §26-2-84.

Distribution of adulterated articles, §26-2-88.

Exceptions, §26-2-112.

Inspectors' duties, §26-2-100.

Labeling of meat, §§26-2-107, 26-2-108, 26-2-112.

Legislative intent, §26-2-61.

Post-slaughter, §§26-2-103, 26-2-110.

Preparation sites, §§26-2-105, 26-2-110.

Pre-slaughter, §§26-2-102, 26-2-110.

Retail sites, §§26-2-106, 26-2-110.

Seizure of meat, §26-2-85.

Storage of meat, §26-2-113.

Milk and milk products.

Ice cream, §26-2-240.

Raw dairy act.

Examination of raw milk for adulteration or misbranding, §26-2-455.

ADVERTISING.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Factors taken into account in determining whether misleading, §26-3-14.

Labeling or advertising as antiseptic, §26-3-15.

When drug, device or cosmetic advertisement deemed false, §26-3-13.

False advertising.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Factors in determining whether advertisement misleading, §26-3-14.

When advertisement deemed false, §26-3-13.

Food.

Misleading advertisements, §§26-2-29, 26-2-30.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with advertising.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Food.

Bait and switch, §26-2-152.

ADVERTISING —Cont'd

Food —Cont'd

Misleading advertisements.

Adulteration and misbranding, §26-2-29.

Factors to be taken into account, §26-2-30.

Meat.

Deceptive advertising.

Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-151.

Disclosure of price per pound, §26-2-152.

Legislative intent, §26-2-150.

Plant-based meat, advertising requirements, §26-2-152.

Use of "Georgia" in advertisements, §26-2-115.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-154.

Spring water, §26-2-4.

AGE.

Amusement ride operators.

Minimum age, §25-15-60.

Carnival ride safety.

Minimum age of operators, §25-15-90.

Posting of age requirements, §25-15-98.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

AGRICULTURE.

Brands and marks.

Food adulteration and misbranding.

General provisions, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Commissioner of agriculture.

Bread and flour, §§26-2-290, 26-2-296.

Milk and milk products.

Raw dairy act.

Enforcement duties of commissioner, §26-2-452.

Injunction of continued violations, §26-2-464.

Rulemaking to implement provisions, §26-2-453.

Rules and regulations.

Raw dairy act, §26-2-453.

Department of agriculture.

Food safety modernization act.

Cooperation in implementation of federal food safety modernization act, §§26-2-440, 26-2-441.

Meat contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

INDEX

AGRICULTURE —Cont'd

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

AIRPORTS.

Blasting near, §25-8-3.

Firefighters.

Defined, §25-4-2.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

ALBUTEROL.

Schools.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe certain asthma medication for schools, §26-4-116.3.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §§25-10-2, 25-10-2.1.

ALLERGIES.

Epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.
Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

AMBULATORY SURGICAL OR OBSTETRICAL FACILITIES.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.
Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Fire safety standards.

Adoption of state standards, §25-2-12.

AMMONIA.

Anhydrous ammonia.

Regulation of storage, handling and transportation, §25-2-16.
Safety fire commissioner.
Fees.
Transportation or storage permit, §25-2-4.1.

AMMUNITION.

Explosives.

Regulation.
Exception as to small arms ammunition, §25-2-17.

Fireworks.

Exception to definition, §25-10-1.

AMUSEMENT RIDES, §§25-15-50 to 25-15-69.

Accident reports, §25-15-61.

Age of ride operators.

Minimum age, §25-15-60.

Amusement Ride Safety Act.

Short title, §25-15-50.

Applicability of chapter, §25-15-64.

Bond of owner or operator, §25-15-62.

Carnival rides, §§25-15-80 to 25-15-101.

Cash or security coverage of owner or operator, §25-15-62.

Cessation of operation.

Temporary orders, §25-15-66.

Compliance with chapter.

Existing rides, §25-15-65.

Construction of act.

Local regulation.
Imposition of regulatory fees or taxes, §25-15-99.

County regulation, §25-15-69.

Definitions, §25-15-51.

Denial of entry to rides.

Right of owners or operators, §25-15-67.

Existing rides.

Period for compliance with chapter, §25-15-65.
Use, §25-15-65.

Fees.

Permit fee.
Defined, §25-15-51.

Injunctions.

Operating ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Inspections, §25-15-56.

Certificate of inspection, §25-15-55.
Defined, §25-15-51.

Issuance, §25-15-56.

Licensed inspector.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Local regulation, §25-15-69.

Private inspectors.

Licensing, §25-15-54.

Right of access of inspectors, §25-15-67.

Waiver of requirement, §25-15-57.

Insurance of owner or operator, §25-15-62.

Licenses.

Private inspectors, §25-15-54.

Local regulation, §25-15-69.

INDEX

AMUSEMENT RIDES —Cont'd **Mandamus.**

Operation of ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Municipal regulation, §25-15-69.

Noise levels.

Local regulation, §25-15-69.

Operators.

Attendance at all times ride in operation, §25-15-60.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Liability insurance, bond, cash or security coverage, §25-15-62.

Minimum age, §25-15-60.

Number of rides operated at one time, §25-15-60.

Owners.

Accident reports, §25-15-61.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Liability insurance, bond, cash or security coverage, §25-15-62.

Recordkeeping, §25-15-59.

Permit to operate.

Applications, §25-15-55.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Fee.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Issuance, §25-15-58.

Required, §25-15-55.

Playground equipment.

Chapter not applicable to, §25-15-64.

Recordkeeping of owners, §25-15-59.

Record of variances from standards and regulations, §25-15-63.

Report of accidents, §25-15-61.

Safety fire commissioner.

Consultation, §25-15-52.

Formulation of standards and regulations, §25-15-53.

Liability, §25-15-68.

Licensing of private inspectors, §25-15-54.

Powers and duties, §25-15-53.

Temporary cessation of operation and injunctions, §25-15-66.

Waiver of inspection requirements, §25-15-57.

Short title.

Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-50.

Single-passenger coin-operated rides.

Chapter not applicable to, §25-15-64.

Standards and regulations.

Defined, §25-15-51.

AMUSEMENT RIDES —Cont'd

Standards and regulations —Cont'd

Variances, §25-15-63.

State liability not created, §25-15-68.

Variances from standards and regulations, §25-15-63.

Violations of provisions of chapter, §25-15-66.

AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY ACT.

General provisions, §§25-15-50 to 25-15-69.

Short title, §25-15-50.

ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK.

Epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

ANHYDROUS AMMONIA.

Regulation of storage, handling and transportation, §25-2-16.

Safety fire commissioner.

Fees.

Transportation or storage permit, §25-2-4.1.

ANIMALS.

Meat contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

ANTIBIOTICS.

Beef produced without antibiotics.

Labeling, §26-2-30.1.

ANTISEPTICS.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Labeling or advertising of drug as antiseptic, §26-3-15.

ANTI-STEERING AND TRANSPARENCY ACT.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-119.

APARTMENTS.

Fire hazards regulation, §25-2-19.

Smoke detectors, §25-2-40.

INDEX

APPEALS.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Persons aggrieved by orders or acts under chapter, §25-15-28.

Suspension and revocation of inspectors' certificates of competency, §25-15-21.

Fires.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

License or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-18.

Safety fire commissioner.

Rulings or decisions, §25-2-10.

State fire marshal.

Rulings or decisions, §25-2-10.

Food service establishments.

Final order or determination by department of public health.

Review, §26-2-376.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.

APPEARANCES.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Licensee disciplinary proceedings.

Failure to appear, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

APPROPRIATIONS.

Fire departments.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §25-6-6.

ARBITRATION.

Firefighters.

Labor disputes, §§25-5-3, 25-5-8.

ARREST.

Arson.

Sheriffs and other peace officers.

Payment, §25-2-35.

State fire marshal, §25-2-27.

Drugs and narcotics agency.

Police powers, §26-4-29.

Fires.

State fire marshal.

Authority, §25-2-9.

ARSENIC.

Poisons.

Schedule A, §26-4-160.

ARSON.

Arrest.

Sheriffs and other peace officers.

Payment, §25-2-35.

State fire marshal, §25-2-27.

Fire departments.

Powers and duties, §25-3-1.

Insurance.

Payment of claims.

Notice, §25-2-33.1.

Investigations.

Arrest of suspect, §25-2-27.

District attorney.

Furnishing of information to, §25-2-27.

Local governing authorities, §25-2-12.

Procedure.

Taking of testimony, §25-2-27.

Subpoenas, §25-2-28.

Municipal corporations.

Investigations, §25-2-12.

Reports.

State fire marshal and insurers, §25-2-33.1.

State fire marshal.

Investigations.

Procedure, §25-2-27.

ARTERIES.

Slaughter of animals.

Approved methods.

Instantaneous severance of carotid arteries, §26-2-110.1.

ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS.

Labeling regulations.

Exemptions, §26-2-62.

Misbranded food, §26-2-28.

ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.

Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Fire safety standards.

Adoption of state minimum standards, §25-2-13.

Prescription drugs.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Safe medications practice act,

§§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

ASSOCIATIONS.

Cigarette fire safety.

False certifications, §25-14-6.

INDEX

ASTHMA.

Schools.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe certain asthma medication for schools, §26-4-116.3.

ATHLETICS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

ATTICS.

Smoke detectors.

Exception as to uninhabited attics, §25-2-40.

ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Amusement Ride Safety Act.

Petition for injunction or writ of mandamus.
Operation of ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Carnival Ride Safety Act.

Petition for injunction or mandamus.
Operation after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-96.

Cigarette fire safety.

Enforcement authority, §25-14-8.
Actions for enforcement of violations, §25-14-6.

Fire protection and safety.

Mutual aid resource pact.
Articles of association, by laws and regulations.
Approval by attorney general, §25-6-3.

Prosecution for violations, §25-6-11.

Meat and meat products.

Failure to file inspection reports.
Prosecution for recovery of forfeitures, §26-2-81.

ATTORNEYS' FEES.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering, actions for violations, §26-5-80.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature.
Actions for civil damages for violations, §25-13-9.

ATTORNEYS' FEES —Cont'd

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
Patient brokering, actions for violations, §26-5-80.

AUDITS.

Pharmacy audit bill of rights, §26-4-118.

AUTO-INJECTABLE EPINEPHRINE.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.
Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

B

BABCOCK TESTS, §26-2-241.

BACON.

Meat inspection generally, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

BACTERIA.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards, §26-2-458.

BAKERIES.

Food sales establishment.

Defined, §26-2-21.

BARBITURIC ACID.

Misbranding drugs, §26-3-8.

BARS.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

BASEMENTS.

Smoke detectors, §§25-2-13, 25-2-40.

BEAVERS.

Destruction of beaver dams, §25-8-2.

BEEF.

Advertising, §26-2-152.

Food service establishments.

Imported beef.
Display of information, §26-2-155.

“Georgia lean” beef.

Standards for labeling and certification, §26-2-30.1.

Imported beef.

Food service establishment.
Display of information, §26-2-155.

Meat inspection, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

BEEF —Cont'd

Processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

BEVERAGES.

Soft drinks.

General provisions, §§26-2-350 to 26-2-357.

BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS.

Substitutions of interchangeable products by pharmacists, §26-4-81.

BLADDER CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

BLASTING, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Airports.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Blasting standards act.

Short title, §25-8-1.

Blast-to-structure distance.

Formula, §25-8-4.

Certificate of registration.

Suspension or revocation, §25-8-7.

Churches.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Definitions, §25-8-2.

Enforcement of chapter, §25-8-11.

Highways.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Housing.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Identification cards.

Refusal, §25-8-7.

Suspension or revocation, §25-8-7.

Licensing, §25-8-6.

Refusal, suspension, or revocation of license, §25-8-7.

Particle velocity.

Defined, §25-8-2.

Limitations, §25-8-3.

Penalties.

Violations of chapter, §25-8-12.

Pipelines.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Railroads.

Proximity, §25-8-3.

Records.

Maintenance, §25-8-8.

Minimum data, §25-8-8.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation, §25-8-9.

BLASTING —Cont'd

Safety fire commissioner.

Confidentiality of information.

Documents submitted to commissioner, §25-8-11.

Enforcement of chapter, §25-8-11.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation, §25-8-9.

Variations from chapter.

Approval, §25-8-10.

Schools.

Proximity to schools, §25-8-3.

Seismograph measurements.

Use, §25-8-5.

Short title of chapter.

Blasting standards act, §25-8-1.

Standards.

Generally, §25-8-4.

Table, §25-8-4.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Variations from chapter.

Approval by commissioner, §25-8-10.

Violations of chapter.

Penalties, §25-8-12.

BLASTING CAPS, §25-1-1.

BLASTING STANDARDS ACT.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Short title, §25-8-1.

BOARDS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

State board of pharmacy.

General provisions, §§26-4-20 to 26-4-30.

BOILER AND PRESSURE VESSEL SAFETY ACT.

General provisions, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

Short title, §25-15-10.

BOILERS AND PRESSURE

VESSELS, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

Appeals.

Inspector's certificates of competency.

Suspension and revocation, §25-15-21.

Persons aggrieved by orders or acts under chapter, §25-15-28.

Applicability of chapter, §25-15-10.

Exceptions, §25-15-16.

Boiler.

Defined, §25-15-11.

BOILERS AND PRESSURE

VESSELS —Cont'd

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act.

Short title, §25-15-10.

Definitions, §25-15-11.

Effect of chapter on new construction, §25-15-14.

Examination of inspectors, §25-15-20.

Exceptions from chapter, §25-15-16.

Fees.

Inspection fees, §§25-15-25, 25-15-27.

Hearings.

Inspector's certificate of competency.
Suspension and revocation,
§25-15-21.

Heating boiler.

Defined, §25-15-11.

High pressure, high temperature water boiler.

Defined, §25-15-11.

Inspections.

Appeals by persons aggrieved by orders, §25-15-28.

Certificate of competency of inspectors.

Lost or destroyed certificates.

Placement, §25-15-22.

Reinstatement after suspension,
§25-15-21.

Replacement of lost or destroyed certificates, §25-15-22.

Suspension and revocation,
§25-15-21.

Certificate of inspection, §25-15-23.

Defined, §25-15-11.

Issuance, §25-15-24.

Required for operation, §25-15-26.

Suspension, §25-15-24.

Chief inspector, §25-15-17.

Deputy inspectors, §25-15-18.

Examination of inspectors, §25-15-20.

Fees, §25-15-25.

Payment, §25-15-27.

Operation of boiler or pressure vessel.

Inspection certificate required,
§25-15-26.

Reinspections, §25-15-25.

Special inspectors, §25-15-19.

Records, §25-15-24.

Reports, §25-15-24.

Interest.

Inspection fees, §25-15-25.

Liability of state.

State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Local government.

Limitations on authority to regulate,
§25-15-29.

BOILERS AND PRESSURE

VESSELS —Cont'd

Maximum allowable working pressure, §25-15-15.

New construction.

Effect, §25-15-14.

Notice.

Inspector's certificate of competency.

Suspension and revocation,
§25-15-21.

Operation.

Valid inspection certificate required,
§25-15-26.

Penalties.

Civil penalties for violations,
§25-15-31.

Failure to inspect, §25-15-25.

Power boiler.

Defined, §25-15-11.

Pressure vessel.

Defined, §25-15-11.

Rules and regulations, §25-15-13.

Safety fire commissioner.

Chief inspector.

Appointment, §25-15-17.

Commissioner defined, §25-15-11.

Consulting on boilers and pressure vessels, §25-15-12.

Deputy inspectors.

Employment, §25-15-18.

Inspection certificate.

Suspension, §25-15-24.

Inspections, §25-15-23.

Rules and regulations.

Formulation by office, §25-15-13.

Special inspectors.

Issuance of certificates of competency upon request of company, §25-15-19.

Short title.

Boiler and pressure vessel safety act,
§25-15-10.

State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Working pressure.

Maximum allowed, §25-15-15.

BOMBS.

Fireworks.

Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

BONDS, SURETY.

Amusement rides.

Owners or operators, §25-15-62.

Carnival ride safety.

Operators, §25-15-92.

INDEX

BONDS, SURETY —Cont'd

Fires.

Safety fire commissioner rulings or decisions.

Appeal to court, §25-2-10.

Fireworks.

Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.

Meat inspection.

Release bond, §26-2-85.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Prescriptions.

Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-14.

BOOKS.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with books.

Prohibited acts, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

BOVINES.

Meat inspection, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

BRAIN RELATED DISORDERS.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

BRANDS AND MARKS.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

BREAD AND FLOUR, §§26-2-290 to 26-2-297.

Commissioner.

Defined, §26-2-290.

Duties, §26-2-296.

Definitions, §26-2-290.

Degerminated corn meal.

Defined, §26-2-290.

Vitamins and ingredients, §26-2-293.

Degerminated hominy grits.

Defined, §26-2-290.

Vitamins and ingredients, §26-2-293.

Enrichment.

Defined, §26-2-290.

Flour, §26-2-291.

Exemptions, §26-2-294.

BREAD AND FLOUR —Cont'd

Flour.

Enrichment, §26-2-291.

Milling process, §26-2-291.

Vitamins and ingredients in flour, §26-2-291.

Labels.

Requirements, §26-2-295.

Scope of article.

Exemptions, §26-2-294.

Violations of article.

Fines, §26-2-297.

Prison terms, §26-2-297.

Vitamins.

Certain vitamins required in bread, §26-2-292.

Degerminated corn meal, §26-2-293.

Degerminated hominy grits, §26-2-293.

Flour, §26-2-291.

BREAST CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

BRIBERY.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

BROADCASTERS.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with productions.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

BRUCELLOSIS.

Raw dairy act.

Testing of animals for diseases, §26-2-460.

BUILDING CODES.

Building presenting special hazards.

Plan review or inspection.

Required for building permit and certificate of occupancy, §25-2-14.

Plan review or inspection.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-14.

Private professional providers.

Building code plan reviews performed by, §25-2-14.

BUILDINGS AND HOUSING.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

INDEX

BUILDINGS AND HOUSING —Cont'd

Blasting —Cont'd

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Certificates of occupancy.

State minimum fire safety standards.
Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.

Demolition.

Blasting operations.
General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.
Scaffolding and staging requirements, §25-15-110.
Unsafe conditions.
Remedy by city or county, §25-2-25.

Excavations.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Permits.

State minimum fire safety standards.
Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.
Temporary occupancy permits, §25-2-15.

Plan review.

State minimum fire safety standards.
Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.

Private professionals to provide plan review.

State minimum fire safety standards.
Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.

Scaffolding.

Requirements for design, §25-15-110.

Staging.

Requirements for design, §25-15-110.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.

Safety fire commissioner.

Cooperation with commissioner, §25-2-34.

BURNING TIME FOR CIGARETTES.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

BURN INJURIES.

Serious burn injuries.

Reports to safety fire division, §25-2-32.1.
Investigation of reported injuries, §25-2-32.2.

BUSINESSES.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

General provisions, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

General provisions, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-1 to 26-4-179.
Pharmacies generally, §§26-4-110 to 26-4-119.

BUTTERMILK.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

C

CAFETERIAS.

Food service establishments generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

CAGES.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plant.

When conditions other than sanitary deemed to exist, §26-2-208.

CALCIUM.

Self-rising flour enrichment.

Ingredients required, §26-2-291.

CALIBRATION.

Blasting operations regulations.

Requirements governing use of explosives generally, §25-8-3.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

CALVES.

Approved methods for handling and slaughtering of animals, §26-2-110.1.

CAMPS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

INDEX

CAMPYLOBACTER.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards, §26-2-458.

CANCELLATION.

Milk and milk products.

Enforcement of article generally, §26-2-247.

Intermingling of grade A milk or milk products with other grades.

Enforcement powers, §26-2-243.

Third-party prescription program.

Notice requirement, §26-4-144.

Use of identification card of canceled program, §26-4-147.

CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

CANDLING OF EGGS.

Classifications determined by,

§26-2-261.

Information labels affixed to cases at time of candling, §26-2-268.

Licensing of candlers, §26-2-272.

CANNABIS.

Drugs in cosmetics standards, labeling and adulteration.

When drug or device deemed misbranded, §26-3-8.

CARBONATED BEVERAGES.

Labels clearly giving common or usual name of each ingredient.

Inapplicability of provision where ingredients fully and correctly disclosed, §26-2-28.

Soft drinks generally, §§26-2-350 to 26-2-357.

CARCASSES.

Beef, pork and lamb sales.

Advertising carcass cuts, §26-2-152.

Food for human consumption.

Sale of partial or whole animal carcass for use as.

Advertising, §26-2-153.

Food service establishments serving carcass beef imported from foreign country.

Display of information required, §26-2-155.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

CARCASSES —Cont'd

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

General provisions, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

CARNIVAL RIDES, §§25-15-80 to 25-15-101.

Accident reports, §25-15-91.

Advisory board on carnival ride safety.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Age of ride operators.

Minimum age, §25-15-90.

Age requirements.

Posting, §25-15-98.

Bond of operators, §25-15-92.

Carnival ride safety act.

Short title, §25-15-80.

Cessation orders.

Temporary orders, §25-15-96.

Compliance with chapter.

Existing rides, §25-15-95.

County regulation, §25-15-101.

Definitions, §25-15-81.

Denial of entry to ride, §25-15-97.

Engineering evaluation for safety.

Permit requirement, §25-15-85.

Exempted rides, §25-15-94.

Existing rides.

Compliance with chapter, §25-15-95.

Fees.

Inspection fees, §25-15-83.

Permit fee.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Injunctions.

Operation after temporary cessation order, §25-15-96.

Inspections.

Access to ride by inspectors, §25-15-97.

Certificate of inspection, §25-15-86.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Fees, §25-15-83.

Licensed inspector.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Local regulation, §25-15-101.

Private inspectors.

Licensing, §25-15-84.

Records, §25-15-89.

Waiver for rides inspected by other entities, §25-15-87.

Insurance of operators, §25-15-92.

Itinerant carnival rides.

Registration with in-state agent, §25-15-99.

CARNIVAL RIDES —Cont'd

Licensing of private inspectors,
§25-15-84.

Local regulation, §25-15-101.

Mandamus.

Operation after temporary cessation
order, §25-15-96.

Municipal regulation, §25-15-101.

New rides.

Inspection before commencing public
operation, §25-15-86.

Noise levels.

Local regulation, §25-15-101.

Operators.

Attendance at all times during
operation, §25-15-90.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Liability insurance, bond or other
security, §25-15-92.

Minimum standards for operation,
§25-15-90.

Posting of age, size and weight
requirements, §25-15-98.

Owners.

Accident reports, §25-15-91.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Liability insurance, bond or other
security, §25-15-92.

Maintenance, inspection and repair
records, §25-15-89.

Posting of age, size and weight
requirements, §25-15-98.

Permit to operate.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Engineering evaluation as
prerequisite, §25-15-85.

Fee.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Issuance, §25-15-88.

Required, §25-15-85.

Playground equipment.

Exempted rides, §25-15-94.

Records.

Maintenance, inspection and repair
records, §25-15-89.

Variances from standards and
regulations, §25-15-93.

**Registration of itinerant carnival
rides with in-state agents,**
§25-15-99.

Reports.

Accident reports, §25-15-91.

Safety fire commissioner.

Consultation, §25-15-82.

CARNIVAL RIDES —Cont'd

Safety fire commissioner —Cont'd

Formulation of standards and
regulations, §25-15-83.

Liability not created, §25-15-100.

Licensing of private inspectors,
§25-15-84.

Powers and duties, §25-15-83.

Temporary cessation orders and
injunctions, §25-15-96.

Variances from standards and
regulations, §25-15-93.

Waiver of inspections, §25-15-87.

Short title.

Carnival ride safety act, §25-15-80.

**Single-passenger coin-operated
rides.**

Exempted rides, §25-15-94.

Size requirements.

Posting, §25-15-98.

Standards and regulations.

Compliance by existing rides,
§25-15-95.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Formulation by department,
§25-15-83.

Variances, §25-15-93.

State liability not created,
§25-15-100.

Variances.

Standards and regulations, §25-15-93.

Violations of chapter, §25-15-96.

Weight requirements.

Posting, §25-15-98.

CARNIVAL RIDE SAFETY ACT.

General provisions, §§25-15-80 to
25-15-101.

Short title, §25-15-80.

CARNIVALS.

Licenses.

Fees, §25-2-4.1.

Fire prevention regulatory license,
§25-2-20.

Ride safety, §§25-15-80 to 25-15-101.

**Safety fire commissioner fees and
charges,** §25-2-4.1.

CAROTID ARTERIES.

**Approved methods for handling and
slaughtering of animals,**
§26-2-110.1.

CATERERS.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

INDEX

CATTLE.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

CEASE AND DESIST ORDERS.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

License or permit revocation or suspension, §§25-12-17, 25-12-18.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Violations of provisions, §25-11-16.

Fireworks violations, §25-10-11.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Prescription medications integrity act, violations, §26-4-203.

State board of pharmacy, §26-4-28.

Prescription medication integrity act.

Violations of, §26-4-203.

CEILINGS.

Smoke detectors mounted on, §25-2-40.

CELLARS.

Smoke detectors required in new dwellings, §25-2-40.

CENTRIFUGE.

Testing of milk, cream, etc., §26-2-241.

CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY.

Fire protection sprinkler contractors.

Application, §25-11-4.

Building permit.

Proof of contractor's competency as requirement, §25-11-13.

Certificate of competency.

Nonrenewal to discipline, §25-11-17.

Defined, §25-11-2.

Fees, §25-11-4.

Renewal, §25-11-4.

Failure to renew, §25-11-18.

Revocation, §§25-11-16, 25-11-17.

Suspension, §25-11-17.

CERTIFICATES OF COMPLETION.

Fires.

State minimum fire safety standards. Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE.

Fire departments legally organized to operate in state, §25-3-22.

Revocation or suspension, §25-3-25.

CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §§25-2-14, 25-2-15.

Fires.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRATION.

Explosives' users, §25-8-7.

CERTIFICATION OF

FIREFIGHTERS, §§25-4-9, 25-4-12.

CERVICAL CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

CHARITIES.

Food.

Donation.

Inspection of donated food, §26-1-1.

Maintenance of information referral service, §26-1-1.

CHEESE.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

CHEESE FACTORIES.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

CHEWING GUM.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.

Food defined, §26-2-21.

General provisions, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

When food deemed adulterated, §26-2-26.

CHICKENS.

Eggs.

General provisions, §§26-2-260 to 26-2-274.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

CHILD CARE CENTERS.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

CHILD LABOR.

Fireworks.

Storage or public displays of fireworks.
Employment of persons under age
18 in connection with,
§25-10-4.1.

CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM.

Adulterated ice cream, §26-2-240.

CHOCOLATE MILK.

**Grade A chocolate milk (raw or
pasteurized).**

Meaning ascribed to, §26-2-231.

CHOKING.

Food service establishments.

Assistance to persons choking.
Contents and posting of notices,
§26-2-374.
Civil liability of persons rendering
emergency aid, §26-2-374.
Notices relating to assistance,
§26-2-374.

CHRONIC RENAL DISEASE.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.
Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

CHURCHES.

Blasting in proximity to, §25-8-3.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

CIGARETTE FIRE SAFETY,

§§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

**Alteration of cigarette affecting
ignition propensity,** §25-14-4.

Approval of proposed markings,
§25-14-5.

Banding of cigarettes.

Lowered permeability bands, §25-14-3.

Certifications.

Dealers and agents to be provided
copies, §25-14-5.
False certifications, penalties,
§25-14-6.
Fees for each cigarette listed, §25-14-4.
Manufacturer submission of written
certifications, §25-14-4.
Recertification, §25-14-4.
Testing standard, §25-14-3.

CIGARETTE FIRE SAFETY —Cont'd
**Changes in New York safety
standards.**

Effect, §25-14-11.

Complete test trial.

Number of cigarettes required to be
tested, §25-14-3.

Consumer testing.

Sale for, §25-14-3.

Definitions, §25-14-2.

Effectiveness review and report,
§25-14-3.

Enforcement authority.

Attorney general and commissioner,
§25-14-8.

Examination of books and records,
§25-14-8.

Federal law preemption, §25-14-10.

**Forfeiture of non compliant
cigarettes,** §25-14-6.

Inspection of cigarettes, §25-14-7.

Labeling of cigarettes.

Approval of proposed markings,
§25-14-5.
Compliance to be indicated, §25-14-5.

Laboratories conducting testing.

Quality control and quality assurance
program, §25-14-3.

Out of state sales, §25-14-9.

Penalties for violations.

Failure to make copies of test reports
available, §25-14-3.

Sales in violation of provisions,
§25-14-6.

Preemption by federal law, §25-14-10.

Reports of testing, §25-14-3.

Rules, promulgation, §25-14-7.

Sales.

Existing inventory, §25-14-3.
Outside of state, §25-14-9.
Violations, civil penalties, §25-14-6.

Short title.

Georgia fire safety standard and
firefighter protection act, §25-14-1.

Standards for testing, §25-14-3.

Changes in New York safety
standards, effect, §25-14-11.

Testing.

Alternative testing methods and
standards, §25-14-3.
Changes in New York safety
standards, effect, §25-14-11.
Required testing, §25-14-3.

INDEX

CIGARS AND CIGARETTES.

Fires caused by discarding lighted cigarette or cigar.

Cigarette fire safety generally,
§§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

CINNAMON ROLLS OR BUNS.

Bread defined, §26-2-290.

CIRCUSES.

Licenses.

Fire prevention regulatory license,
§25-2-20.

CLAMS.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to
26-2-320.

CLEANING.

Scaffolding and staging used for cleaning buildings.

Design requirements, §25-15-110.

CLOTHING.

Fire departments.

Minimum requirements, §25-3-23.

CLUBS.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property.

Requirements as to construction,
maintenance and use, §25-2-13.

COAL-TAR COLOR.

When cosmetic deemed adulterated,
§26-3-11.

When drug or device deemed adulterated, §26-3-7.

When food deemed adulterated,
§26-2-26.

COAL-TAR HAIR DYE.

When cosmetic deemed adulterated,
§26-3-11.

COCAINE.

When drug or device deemed misbranded, §26-3-8.

COCOA BUTTER.

Adulterated ice cream, §26-2-240.

CODEINE.

When drug or device deemed misbranded, §26-3-8.

COFFEE SHOPS.

Food service establishments generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

COIN-OPERATED AMUSEMENT MACHINES.

Amusement ride safety.

Chapter inapplicable to
single-passenger coin-operated
ride, §25-15-64.

Carnival ride safety.

Single-passenger coin-operated rides
exempted, §25-15-94.

COIN-OPERATED MACHINES.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

COLAS.

Soft drinks.

General provisions, §§26-2-350 to
26-2-357.

COLIFORM.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and
temperature standards, §26-2-458.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

COLOR ADDITIVES.

Defined, §26-2-62.

Georgia meat inspection act.

Adulterated defined, §26-2-62.

COMMON CARRIERS.

Prescriptions.

Use to dispense, §26-4-60.

COMMON LAW.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Immunity on failure to respond.
Immunity not exclusive of similar
immunities granted by common
law, §25-6-5.

COMMONSENSE CONSUMPTION ACT.

Weight gain or obesity from long-term consumption of food,
§§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

Applicability of article.

Covered claims pending on effective
date, §26-2-436.

Covered claims pending on effective
date.

Applicability of article, §26-2-436.

Definitions, §26-2-431.

INDEX

COMMONSENSE CONSUMPTION ACT —Cont'd

Weight gain or obesity from long-term consumption of food —Cont'd

Exception to non-liability.

Food manufacturers, packers,
carriers, holders, sellers,
marketers or advertisers,
§26-2-433.

Complaint initiating excepted
action, requirements,
§26-2-434.

Discovery, stay during pendency of
motion to dismiss, §26-2-435.

Stay of proceeding pending motion
to dismiss, §26-2-435.

Exemption from liability.

Food manufacturers, packers,
carriers, holders, sellers,
marketers or advertisers,
§26-2-432.

Food manufacturers, packers, carriers,
holders, sellers, marketers or
advertisers.

Exception to non-liability, §26-2-433.

Complaint initiating excepted
action, requirements,
§26-2-434.

Discovery, stay during pendency of
motion to dismiss, §26-2-435.

Stay of proceeding pending motion
to dismiss, §26-2-435.

Exemption from liability, §26-2-432.

Short title, §26-2-430.

Title of act, §26-2-430.

COMMON WALLS.

**Buildings presenting special
hazards,** §25-2-13.

COMMUNITY HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF.

**Drugs and narcotics agency
assigned to,** §26-4-29.

**Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act,** §§26-5-40 to
26-5-62.

Pharmacy, state board.

Division of department, §26-4-20.

COMPLAINTS.

Commonsense consumption act.

Weight gain or obesity from long-term
consumption of food.

Non-liability of food distributors.

Action alleging exception to
non-liability, §26-2-434.

COMPOUNDING MEDICATIONS,
§26-4-86.

Nonresident pharmacies, §26-4-114.1.

CONDEMNATION.

Milk and milk products.

Products produced, delivered, etc., in
violation of laws, §26-2-245.

CONDENSED MILK.

Milk and milk products.

General provisions, §§26-2-230 to
26-2-250.

CONDOMINIUMS.

Fire protection and safety.

Smoke detectors required, §25-2-40.

Smoke detectors required, §25-2-40.

CONFECTIONARIES.

Food establishments defined,
§26-2-21.

When food deemed adulterated,
§26-2-26.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.

**Drug abuse treatment and
education programs.**

Records, names and communications
of drug dependent persons,
§26-5-17.

Food adulteration and misbranding.

Confidential information obtained by
department, §26-2-34.1.

**Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act.**

Confidentiality of patient information,
§26-5-56.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Patient profiles, §26-4-80.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs, §26-5-17.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act.

Confidentiality of patient
information, §26-5-56.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Anti-steering and transparency act.

Prohibited referrals and conflicts of
interest, §26-4-119.

CONFLICTS OF LAW.

Drugs and cosmetic act.

Other laws not affected by chapter,
§26-3-22.

INDEX

CONFLICTS OF LAW —Cont'd

Fires.

- State minimum fire safety standards.
- Buildings presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

CONFUSION.

Misleading advertisements, §26-2-29.

CONSUMER FIREWORKS.

Contraband, seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Distributors.

- License required, §25-10-5.1.
- Permitted activities, §25-10-2.

Lawful and unlawful activities generally, §25-10-2.

Locations where consumer fireworks not to be used, §25-10-2.

Operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.

Permitted activities, §25-10-2.

Violations of chapter.

- Enforcement authority, §25-10-6.

CONTAINERS.

Milk and milk products.

- Raw dairy act.
- Labeling of bottles, packages and containers for raw milk, §26-2-456.

CONTAMINATED MEAT.

Food, drugs and cosmetics.

- Standards, labeling and adulteration of food.
- Adulteration and mislabeling of food, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.
- Animals suspected of bearing any residue causing contaminated meat, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

CONTINUING EDUCATION.

Pharmacists, §26-4-45.

CONTRABAND.

Drugs and narcotics agency, seizure and possession, §26-4-29.

Fireworks.

- Public displays.
- Excess fireworks, §25-10-4.
- Violations of chapter.
- Seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

CONTRACTORS.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

- General provisions, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

CONTRACTS.

Firefighters.

- Labor and employment relations.
- Agreements constituting collective bargaining contract, §25-5-12.
- Duration of contract, §25-5-6.
- Reduction of agreement to written contract, §25-5-6.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.

Fireworks.

- Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §§25-10-2, 25-10-2.1.

CONTUMACY.

Meat inspection.

- Powers of commissioner, §26-2-81.

CONVALESCENT HOMES.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-13.

CORN.

Bread and flour generally, §§26-2-290 to 26-2-297.

CORPORATIONS.

Cigarette fire safety.

- False certifications, §25-14-6.

COSMETICS.

Drug and cosmetic act.

- General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

COSTS.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Patient brokering, actions for violations, §26-5-80.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
- Patient brokering, actions for violations, §26-5-80.

COTTONSEED OIL.

Standards.

- Edible cottonseed oil, §26-2-1.

COUNTERFEITING.

Prescription drugs.

- Order to cease distribution of drug, §26-4-203.
- Penalties, §26-4-205.
- Prohibited acts, §26-4-204.

COUNTIES.

Amusement rides.

- Local regulation, §25-15-69.

INDEX

COUNTIES —Cont'd

Arson.

Investigations, §25-2-12.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Limitations on authority to regulate,
§25-15-29.

Carnival rides.

Local regulation, §25-15-101.

Fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to
25-3-27.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to
25-6-11.

Nomenclature, §§25-13-1 to 25-13-10.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Power to regulate not limited,
§25-12-22.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

Fires.

Arson.

Investigations, §25-2-12.

State fire safety standards.

Adoption, §25-2-12.

Enforcement.

Buildings presenting special
hazards, §25-2-12.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Applicability of chapter to work
performed for, §25-11-14.

Contract and bid requirements,
§25-11-14.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

Ordinances, §26-2-212.

COVID-19.

Vaccinations.

Pharmacy technicians administering
adult vaccines, §26-4-52.

COWS.

Meat inspection generally, §§26-2-60
to 26-2-133.

Milk and milk products.

Generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy generally,
§§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

CRABS.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to
26-2-320.

CRAYFISH.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to
26-2-320.

CREAM.

Milk and milk products generally,
§§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Pastries filled with cream or synthetic cream.

Standards for food, labeling and
containers, §26-2-392.

CREAMERIES.

Milk and milk products generally,
§§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

CREAM TESTERS.

Defined, §26-2-231.

License requirements, §26-2-235.

CREOSOTE.

Sale of poisons.

Schedule B, §26-4-160.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.

Substance abuse.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-61.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE.

Amusement ride safety act.

Violations of chapter, §25-15-66.

Carnival ride safety.

Violations of chapter, §25-15-96.

Consumer fireworks.

Operating under the influence of
alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.

Drug and cosmetic act, §§26-3-23,
26-3-24.

Drug researcher permits, §26-4-49.

Drugs.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs.

Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Violations of provisions, §26-5-19.

Selling in vending machines, §26-4-89.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Eggs.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-274.

Fire departments.

Mutual aid response pacts.

Violations of chapter, §25-6-11.

Nomenclature, §25-13-10.

INDEX

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE

—Cont'd

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Violations of chapter, §25-12-19.
License or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-18.

Firefighters.

Criminal data on applicant, §25-4-8.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Violation of provisions, §25-11-16.

Fireworks.

Operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.
Violations of chapter, §25-10-8.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding, §26-2-24.
Inspection.
Obstruction, §26-2-3.
Sale from mobile vehicles, §26-2-413.

Food processing plants.

Introduction of adulterated food into commerce, §26-2-27.1.
Testing of specimens, failure to report adulteration, §26-2-27.1.

Food service establishments.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-377.

Meat inspectors.

Violations, §26-2-88.

Meats.

Advertising and sale, §26-2-154.
Contamination, §26-2-186.

Milk and milk products.

Violations, §26-2-250.
Raw dairy act, §26-2-466.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Disciplinary violations, §26-4-62.
Poisons.
Violations of part, §26-4-163.
Third-party prescription programs.
Violations of part, §26-4-148.
Unlawful practice, §26-4-40.
Wholesale drug distributors, §26-4-115.

Poisons.

Violations of part, §26-4-163.

Prescriptions.

Third-party prescription programs.
Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-214, 26-2-215.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE

—Cont'd

Raw dairy act.

Violations, §26-2-466.

Scaffolding design.

Violations of section, §25-15-110.

Staging design.

Violation of section, §25-15-110.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
Patient brokering, §26-5-80.
Violations, §26-5-19.
Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

CUSTOM MILLS.

Bread and grain exemptions, §26-2-294.

CUSTOM SLAUGHTERED AND PREPARED MEAT.

Labeling and handling, §26-2-112.

D

DAIRY ACT OF 1980.

General provisions, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Short title, §26-2-230.

DAIRY PRODUCTS.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

DAMAGES.

Amusement ride safety act.

State not liable under chapter, §25-15-68.

Boiler and pressure vessel safety act.

State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Carnival ride safety act.

State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature.

Actions for civil damages for violations, §25-13-9.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Third-party prescription programs.
Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

INDEX

DAMAGES —Cont'd

Prescriptions.

- Third-party prescription programs.
- Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Punitive damages.

- Fire departments.
- Nomenclature.
- Willful violations, §25-13-9.

Smoke detectors.

- Failure to maintain.
- Affect upon actions for recovery of damages, §25-2-40.

Third-party prescription programs.

- Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Treble damages.

- Fire departments.
- Nomenclature.
- Willful violations, §25-13-9.

Utility facility protection.

- Strict liability, §25-9-14.

DANCE HALLS.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-13.

DEFACEMENT.

Meat inspection.

- Fraudulent practices, §26-2-114.

DEFAULT JUDGMENTS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Licensee disciplinary proceedings.
- Failure to appear, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

DEFINED TERMS.

Abandoned utility facility.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Administration.

- Federal food safety modernization act, cooperation in implementation, §26-2-440.
- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Administrators.

- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.
- Third party prescription program, §26-4-142.

Adulterated.

- Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Advertisement.

- Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Affiliate.

- Pharmacy anti-steering and transparency act, §26-4-119.

Agent.

- Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Airport firefighter.

- Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Airports.

- Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Amusement ride, §25-15-51.

Animal.

- Plant-based meat, advertising requirements, §26-2-152.

Animal food manufacturer.

- Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Applicant.

- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.

Appropriate notice.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Authenticate.

- Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Authentication of product history.

- Nuclear pharmacy law, §26-4-171.

Authorized.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Authorized distributor of record.

- Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Authorized person.

- Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-51.
- Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Automatic-closing device.

- Self-service stations, §25-2-16.

Badge.

- Fire departments.
- Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Betterments.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Biological product.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Blaster, §25-8-2.

Blasting.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Blasting operation, §25-8-2.

Boiler, §25-15-11.

Bottled soft drink, §26-2-350.

Brand name drug.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Bread, §26-2-290.

Broker.

- Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Business day.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Business hours.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Cancer.

Fire departments, insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

Candidates.

Firefighters, §25-4-2.

Capable of use as human food.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Capacity.

State minimum fire safety standards, §25-2-13.

Carnival ride, §25-15-81.

Certificate fee.

Amusement ride safety act, §25-15-51.

Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Certificate holder.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Certificate of competency.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Certificate of inspection.

Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-51.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act, §25-15-11.

Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Certified firefighter.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Chain pharmacy warehouse.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Charge weight.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Charge weight per delay.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Child care learning center.

State minimum fire safety standards, §25-2-13.

Cigarette.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Claims.

Commonsense consumption act, §26-2-431.

Class B firefighting foam.

Use of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, §25-2-41.

Cognizant member.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Cold storage.

Eggs, §26-2-260.

Co-licensed pharmaceutical products.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Co-licensee.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Collaborate.

Safe medications practice act, §26-4-212.

Color additive.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Commerce.

Eggs, §26-2-260.

Compounding.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Compounding of radiopharmaceuticals.

Nuclear pharmacy law, §26-4-171.

Confidential information.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Consumer fireworks, §25-10-1.

Consumer fireworks retail sales facility, §25-10-1.

Consumer fireworks retail sales stand, §25-10-1.

Consumer testing.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-3.

Contaminate.

Meat, §26-2-180.

Contaminated with filth.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Food adulteration and misbranding, §26-2-21.

Controlled substance.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Conviction.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.

Conviction data.

Volunteer firefighters, §25-4-8.1.

Corporate authorities.

Firefighters, §25-5-2.

Corporation.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Cosmetic.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Cream tester.

Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Criminal record.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.

Dairy manufacturing plants.

Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Damages.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Dangerous drug.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Degerminated corn meal, §26-2-290.

Degerminated hominy grits,
§26-2-290.

Delay initiation.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Delay period.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Deliver.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Deputy local fire marshal, §25-2-12.1.

Designate.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Design locate request.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Devices.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Director of public safety.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Dispensing.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Distance.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Distribute.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Prescription medication integrity act,
§26-4-201.

Distributor.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Drop shipment arrangement.

Prescription medication integrity act,
§26-4-201.

Drug.

Drug abuse treatment and education
act, §26-5-3.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §§26-4-4,
26-4-5, 26-4-130.

**Drug abuse treatment and
education programs**, §26-5-3.

Drug dependent person.

Drug abuse treatment and education
act, §26-5-3.

Drug regimen review.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Drug researcher.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Durable medical equipment.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Edible cottonseed oil, §26-2-1.

Effective date.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Egg, §26-2-260.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Egg handler, §26-2-260.

Egg product, §26-2-260.

Electric plant.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

**Electronic data prescription drug
order.**

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Electronic data signature.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Electronic signature.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

**Electronic visual image prescription
drug order.**

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Electronic visual image signature.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Emblem.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Emergency.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Emergency 9-1-1 call.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Emergency service provider.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Engineered fire suppression system,
§25-12-2.

Enrichment.

Bread and flour, §26-2-290.

Enrollee.

Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Excavating.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Excavator.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Explosives.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Regulation of manufacture,
transportation, etc., §25-2-17.

Extern.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Extraordinary circumstances.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Facility.

Prescription medication integrity act,
§26-4-201.

Facility owner or operator.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Farming activities.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Federal act.

Commonsense consumption act,
§26-2-431.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Federal act —Cont'd

Federal food safety modernization act,
cooperation in implementation,
§26-2-440.

Food adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Fire chief.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Fire department, §25-3-21.

Firefighter standards and training,
§25-4-2.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Firefighters, §25-3-21.

Labor and employment relations,
§25-5-2.

Standards and training, §25-4-2.

Fire protection sprinkler contractor license, §25-11-2.

Fire protection sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Fire protection sprinkler system, §25-11-2.

Fire protection system designer, §25-11-2.

Fire protection system designer license, §25-11-2.

Fire protection system inspector, §25-11-2.

Fire protection system inspector's license, §25-11-2.

Fire pump, §25-11-2.

Fire suppression system, §25-12-2.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Firm.

Fire extinguishers and suppression
systems, §25-12-2.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

First responder.

Administering opioid antagonists to
save life of person experiencing
overdose.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Flour, §26-2-290.

Foam-water spray system, §25-11-2.

Foam-water sprinkler system, §25-11-2.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Plant-based meat, advertising
requirements, §26-2-152.

Food additive.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Food nutrition information, §26-2-370.

Food processing plant, §26-2-27.1.

Food service establishment, §26-2-370.

Full-time.

Firefighter standards and training,
§25-4-2.

GCIC.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-61.

GCIC information.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-61.

Generally-known condition allegedly caused by or allegedly likely to result from long-term consumption.

Commonsense consumption act,
§26-2-431.

Generic name.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Governing bodies.

Drug abuse treatment and education
act, §26-5-3.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-41.

Grade A raw milk for human consumption.

Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Raw dairy act, §26-2-450.

Hard copy prescription drug order.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Harm reduction organizations.

Drug overdoses, immunity for opioid
antagonist prescription and
administration, §26-4-116.2.

Health care provider.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs, §26-5-80.

Health care provider network entity.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs, §26-5-80.

Health insurer.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs, §26-5-80.

Heating boiler, §25-15-11.

High pressure, high temperature water boiler, §25-15-11.

Historic building or structure.

State minimum fire safety standards,
§25-2-13.

Hold-open latch.

Self-service stations, §25-2-16.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Horizontal directional drilling.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Hospital pharmacist.

Safe medications practice act,
§26-4-212.

Immediate container.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.
Food adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Inspections.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Institution.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.
Safe medications practice act,
§26-4-212.

Interchangeable biological product.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Intern.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Internal test assessment.

Nuclear pharmacy law, §26-4-171.

Intrastate commerce.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Jurisdiction.

Fire departments, §25-6-1.

Knowing and willful.

Commonsense consumption act,
§26-2-431.

Label.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.
Food adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Labeling.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.
Food adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Landmark museum building.

State minimum fire safety standards,
§25-2-13.

Lard, §26-2-1.

Large project.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Legend drug.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

License.

Drug abuse treatment and education
act, §26-5-3.

Fire extinguishers and suppression
systems, §25-12-2.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-41.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Licensed inspector.

Amusement ride safety act, §25-15-51.
Carnival ride safety act, §25-15-81.

Licensee.

Drug abuse treatment and education
act, §26-5-3.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §26-5-41.

Local fire marshals, §25-2-12.1.

Local governing authority.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Local governing body.

Fire departments.
Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Locate request.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Locator.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Maintenance.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Manufactured milk products.

Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Manufacturers.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.
Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.
Prescription medication integrity act,
§26-4-201.

Manufacturer's exclusive distributor.

Prescription medication integrity act,
§26-4-201.

Manufacturing.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Manufacturing of

radiopharmaceuticals.

Nuclear pharmacy law, §26-4-171.

Meat.

Mobile sales, §26-2-410.
Processing plants, §26-2-200.

Meat broker.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Meat food product.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Meat products.

Processing plants, §26-2-200.

Mechanized excavating equipment.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Milling.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Minimally intrusive excavation methods.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Misbranded.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Mixed edible fat, §26-2-1.

Mobile food service establishment, §26-2-370.

Mobile vehicle.

Food sales, §26-2-410.

Narcotic treatment program.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-41.

Narcotic treatment program clinic pharmacy, §26-4-5.

New York fire safety standards for cigarettes.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

NFPA 1124.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Nonprescription drug.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Nonprofit food sales and food service, §26-2-390.

Nonprofit group.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Nonresident of the state of Georgia.

Fish, §26-2-310.

Nontraditional livestock.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Normal distribution channel.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Notice period.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Nuclear pharmacy, §26-4-171.

Official certificate.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Official compendium.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Food adulteration and misbranding, §26-2-21.

Official device.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Official inspection legend.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Official mark.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Ongoing relationship.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Operator.

Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-51.

Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Opioid antagonists.

Administering opioid antagonists to save life of person experiencing overdose.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Opioid related overdoses.

Administering opioid antagonists to save life of person experiencing overdose.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Organization.

Nonprofit food sales and food service, §26-2-390.

Other person.

Commonsense consumption act, §26-2-431.

Outsourcing facility.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Owners.

Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-51.

Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Pain management clinics.

Drug overdoses, immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.

Participating pharmacy.

Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Particle velocity.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Part-time.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Patient.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-41.

Patient counseling.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Pedigree.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Permanent marker.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Permit.

Amusement ride safety act, §25-15-51.

Carnival ride safety act, §25-15-81.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §25-12-2.

Permit fee.

Amusement ride safety act, §25-15-51.

Carnival ride safety act, §25-15-81.

Person.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Bread and flour, §26-2-290.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Food adulteration and misbranding, §26-2-21.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Person —Cont'd

- Food service establishment, §26-2-370.
- Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.
- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §§26-4-2, 26-4-5.
- Processing plants, §26-2-200.
- Soft drinks, §26-2-350.
- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Pesticide chemical.

- Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

PFAS chemicals.

- Use of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, §25-2-41.

Pharmaceutically equivalent, §26-4-5.

Pharmaceuticals.

- Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Pharmacist, §§26-4-2, 26-4-5.

Pharmacist in charge, §26-4-5.

Pharmacy, §§26-4-2, 26-4-5.

Pharmacy buying cooperative warehouse.

- Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Pharmacy care, §26-4-5.

Pharmacy extern, §26-4-5.

Pharmacy intern, §26-4-5.

Pharmacy technician, §26-4-5.

Political subdivision.

- Food service establishments, §26-2-373.

Portable fire extinguishers.

- Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §25-12-2.

Positive response information system.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Poultry.

- Mobile sales, §26-2-410.

Power boiler, §25-15-11.

Practice of pharmacy, §26-4-4.

Practitioner.

- Drug overdoses, immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.
- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Practitioner of the healing arts.

- Pharmacy, §§26-4-5, 26-4-130.

Preceptor.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Preengineered fire suppression systems, §25-12-2.

Prepared.

- Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Prescription drug.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.
- Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Prescription drug order.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Pressure vessel, §25-15-11.

Prevailing rate.

- Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Private fire service main, §25-11-2.

Private professional provider.

- State minimum fire safety standards.
- Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.

Private water tank.

- Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Program.

- Drug abuse treatment and education act, §26-5-3.
- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.
- Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Program contract.

- Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Program identification card.

- Third party prescriptions, §26-4-142.

Prospective drug use review.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Proximate audience.

- Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Public dairies.

- Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Public safety answering point.

- Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Pyrotechnics.

- Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Quality.

- Eggs, §26-2-260.

Quality control and quality assurance program.

- Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Radiopharmaceutical, §26-4-171.

Radiopharmaceutical quality assurance, §26-4-171.

Radiopharmaceutical service, §26-4-171.

Raw agricultural commodity.

- Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Raw milk for human consumption.

- Raw dairy act, §26-2-450.

Raw whole milk for manufacturing purposes.

- Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

Records check application.

- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-61.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Recovery residence.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-80.

Recruit.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Referral.

Pharmacy anti-steering and transparency act, §26-4-119.

Remote automated medication system.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Remote order entry.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Renderer.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Repackage.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Repackager.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Repeatability.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Resident of the state of Georgia.

Fish, §26-2-310.

Retail dealer.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Retail establishment.

Meat inspection, §26-2-62.

Reverse drug distributor.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Routine road maintenance.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Sale.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Scaled distance.

Blasting, §25-8-2.

Seafood, §26-2-310.

Mobile sales, §26-2-410.

Security paper.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Self-service stations, §25-2-16.

Sell.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Service member.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-44.2.

Sewer lateral.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Sewer system owner or operator.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Significant adverse drug reaction.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Soft drink syrup, §26-2-350.

Spring water, §26-2-4.

Standards and regulations.

Amusement Ride Safety Act, §25-15-51.

Carnival Ride Safety Act, §25-15-81.

Standpipe system.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

State certified firefighter.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

State inspector.

Fires, §25-2-12.1.

Store.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Substance abuse provider.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-80.

Substantial hardship.

Food, adulteration and misbranding regulations, §26-2-34.

Substitution.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Testing.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Use of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, §25-2-41.

Third-party logistics provider.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.
Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Third party prescription program, §26-4-142.

Tolerance zone.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Traffic control devices.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Traffic management system.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Trenchless excavation.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Underground facility.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Ungraded milk.

Milk and milk products, §26-2-231.

United States food, drug and cosmetic act.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Unlocatable facility.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

USP-NF.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Utilities protection center.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

INDEX

DEFINED TERMS —Cont'd

Vaccine.

Adult vaccines, pharmacy technicians administering, §26-4-52.

Variance.

Food, adulteration and misbranding regulations, §26-2-34.

Volunteer.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Volunteer council.

Firefighter standards and training, §25-4-2.

Volunteer fire department.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Waiver.

Food, adulteration and misbranding regulations, §26-2-34.

Wastewater treatment plant.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

Water-based fire protection system.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Water-spray fixed system.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §25-11-2.

Water treatment plant.

Fireworks, §25-10-1.

White lining.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-3.

Wholesale dealer.

Cigarette fire safety, §25-14-2.

Wholesale distribution.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Wholesale distributor.

Pharmacists and pharmacies, §26-4-5.

Prescription medication integrity act, §26-4-201.

Wholesale fish dealer, §26-2-310.

Wholesaler.

Eggs, §26-2-260.

Willful violator.

Fire departments.
Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Written notification.

Fires, state minimum fire safety standards, §25-2-14.2.

DEMOLITION.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Buildings and housing.

Blasting operations.
General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

DEMOLITION —Cont'd

Buildings and housing —Cont'd

Scaffolding and staging requirements, §25-15-110.

Unsafe conditions.

Remedy by city or county, §25-2-25.

DENTISTS.

Dispensing drugs, §26-4-130.

Poisons.

Dispensing poisons in not unusual quantities upon prescriptions, §26-4-162.

Prescriptions.

Poisons dispensed in not unusual quantities upon prescriptions, §26-4-162.

DEPARTMENT STORES.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

DEPOTS.

Milk depots.

Unlawful acts, §26-2-249.

DEPUTIES.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Deputy inspectors, §25-15-18.

Access to premises, §25-15-23.

Examinations, §25-15-20.

Fees, §25-15-27.

Inspections by, §§25-15-23, 25-15-25.

Fire commissioner.

Cease and desist orders.

Issuance by deputy of safety fire commissioner, §25-11-16.

Cooperation with safety fire commissioner and his deputies, §25-2-34.

Fire protection sprinkler contractors.

Exercise of safety fire commissioner's authority by deputy of commissioner, §25-11-3.

Fire marshals.

Local fire marshal, §25-2-12.1.

State fire marshal, §25-2-7.

Fire loss information.

Request for release of information by insurers, §25-2-33.

Investigation of suspected arson, §§25-2-27, 25-2-28.

Right of deputized officials to inspect buildings and premises, §25-2-22.

INDEX

DESSERT PACKAGERS.

Inclusion in term dairy manufacturing plants, §26-2-231.

DESSERTS.

Frozen desserts, §§26-2-239, 26-2-240.

Nonprofit food sales and food service.
Standards for food, labeling, etc.,
§26-2-392.

Standards and requirements,
§26-2-239.

DETECTORS.

Smoke detectors.

Landmark museum buildings.

Required where buildings contain
residential units, §25-2-13.

Required in dwellings and dwelling
units, §25-2-40.

DETONATORS.

Blasting caps, §25-1-1.

Blasting generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Fireworks regulation generally,
§§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

DETOXIFICATION.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act, §§26-5-40 to
26-5-62.

DIABETES.

Advertising of drugs.

When advertisement deemed false,
§26-3-13.

Schools and education.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe ready-to-use glucagon
for schools, §26-4-116.4.

DIALYSIS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.

Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

DIESEL FUEL.

Fire protection regulation, §25-2-16.

DIESEL FUEL PUMP NOZZLE.

Fire protection regulation, §25-2-16.

DIET FOODS.

Misbranding, §26-2-28.

DIGGING.

Excavations.

Blasting generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

DIGITALIS.

Sale of poisons, §26-4-160.

**When drug or device deemed
misbranded,** §26-3-8.

DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS.

Notice to correct unsafe conditions.

Issuance by authorized officials,
§25-2-23.

DIPHThERIA.

Drugs.

False advertising, §26-3-13.

DISASTERS.

Fire departments.

Assistance to agencies or officers of
federal government, §25-3-3.

Insurance coverage for members
responding to disasters, §25-3-23.

DISCIPLINING.

Utility facility protection.

Professional license discipline to
enforce provisions, §25-9-14.

DISCLAIMERS.

Spring water, §26-2-4.

DISCOVERY.

Commonsense consumption act.

Weight gain or obesity from long-term
consumption of food.

Non-liability of food distributors.

Action alleging exception to
non-liability.

Stay pending motion to dismiss,
§26-2-435.

DISHES.

Kosher foods.

Preparation and serving, §26-2-233.

DISTRICT ATTORNEYS.

Amusement ride safety act.

Petition for injunction or writ of
mandamus.

Operation of ride after issuance of
temporary cessation order,
§25-15-66.

Carnival ride safety act.

Petition for injunction or mandamus.

Operation of ride after issuance of
temporary cessation order,
§25-15-96.

DOGS.

Meat.

Label on packages, §26-2-160.

Sale of dog meat.

Human consumption, §26-2-160.

DOGS —Cont'd

Meat —Cont'd

- Sale of dog meat —Cont'd
- Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

DONATIONS.

Food.

- Charities, §26-1-1.
- Inspection of donated food, §26-1-1.
- Maintenance of information and referral service, §26-1-1.

DORMITORIES.

Smoke detectors required, §25-2-40.

DROPSY.

Drug, device or cosmetic advertisements.

- Representing drug as having any effect in dropsy.
- When advertisements deemed false, §26-3-13.

DROUGHT.

Fireworks.

- Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

DRUG ABUSE.

Overdoses.

- Administering opioid antagonists to save life of person experiencing overdose.
- Immunity, §26-4-116.2.
- Immunity.
- Prescribing or administering opioid antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT AND EDUCATION ACT.

General provisions.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Short title, §26-5-1.

DRUG AND COSMETIC ACT,

§§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Adulterated or misbranded drugs and cosmetics.

- Detention, §26-3-4.
- Petition for condemnation, §26-3-4.
- When a cosmetic deemed adulterated, §26-3-11.
- When a cosmetic deemed misbranded, §26-3-12.
- When drug or device deemed adulterated, §26-3-7.
- When drug or device deemed misbranded, §26-3-8.

DRUG AND COSMETIC ACT —Cont'd

Advertising.

- Factors taken into account in determining whether misleading, §26-3-14.
- Labeling or advertising as antiseptic, §26-3-15.
- When drug, device or cosmetic advertisement deemed false, §26-3-13.

Antiseptics.

- Labeling or advertising of drug as antiseptic, §26-3-15.

Board.

- Defined, §26-3-2.
- Notifications, §26-3-19.
- Reports, §26-3-19.
- Samples and specimens, §26-3-17.

Citation of chapter, §26-3-1.

Coal-tar coloring.

- When drug deemed adulterated, §26-3-7.

Conflicts of law.

- Other laws not affected by chapter, §26-3-22.

Definitions, §26-3-2.

Department of agriculture.

- Assistance in enforcement, §26-3-18.

Department of public health.

- Assistance in enforcement, §26-3-18.

Drug agents.

- Impeding, obstructing, hindering, etc., §26-3-23.

Enforcement.

- Assistance from department of agriculture or department of public health, §26-3-18.

Factories.

- Inspection, §26-3-17.

Federal act.

- Conformity with, §26-3-16.
- Defined, §26-3-2.

Hair dyes.

- Coal-tar hair dyes.
- Caution on label, §26-3-11.

Homeopathic drugs.

- Regulations, §26-3-7.

Injunctions.

- Violation of provisions, §26-3-20.

Inspections.

- Factories, warehouses, vehicles, etc., §26-3-17.

Interpretation and construction.

- Construction of chapter, §26-3-21.

Labels.

- Advertising or labeling drug as antiseptic, §26-3-15.

DRUG AND COSMETIC ACT —Cont'd

Labels —Cont'd

Misleading labels.

Factors taken into account in determination, §26-3-14.

Name and address of manufacturer on label of drugs requiring prescription, §26-3-9.

Minor violations, §26-3-6.

Misbranded drugs and cosmetics.

When cosmetic deemed misbranded, §26-3-12.

When drug or device deemed misbranded, §26-3-8.

Motor vehicle inspections, §26-3-17.

New drugs.

Sale, delivery, offer for sale, etc., §26-3-10.

Notice to violator, §26-3-5.

Other laws not affected by chapter, §26-3-22.

Petitions.

Condemnation of adulterated or misbranded drugs and cosmetics, §26-3-4.

Prescriptions.

Name and address of manufacturer on label, §26-3-9.

Prohibited acts.

Enumeration, §26-3-3.

Reports.

Duty of prosecuting attorney upon report of violation, §26-3-5.

State board of pharmacy, §26-3-19.

Rules promulgation, §26-3-16.

Sales.

New drugs, §26-3-10.

Samples, §26-3-17.

Short title of chapter, §26-3-1.

Violations.

Duty of prosecuting attorney upon report of violation, §26-3-5.

Impeding, obstructing, etc., drug agents, §26-3-23.

Injunctions, §26-3-20.

Minor violations, §26-3-6.

Misdemeanor, §26-3-24.

Notification requirements, §26-3-5.

Prohibited acts, §26-3-3.

Warehouses.

Inspection, §26-3-17.

DRUGGISTS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies

generally, §§26-4-1 to 26-4-179.

DRUG OVERDOSES.

Administering opioid antagonists to save life of person experiencing overdose.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Immunity.

Prescribing or administering opioid antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

DRUG RESEARCHERS.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Permits, §26-4-49.

DRUGS.

Adulteration.

Drug and cosmetic act.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Examination by state chemist, §26-4-131.

Controlled substances.

Immunity.

Prescribing or administering opioid antagonist, §26-4-116.2.

Overdose.

Opioid antagonist, prescribing or administering.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Prescriptions.

Hard copy prescription drug orders.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Use of security paper for, §26-4-80.1.

Security paper defined, §26-4-5.

Dangerous drugs.

Storage and handling by pharmacist, §26-4-87.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

General provisions, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Drug and cosmetic act.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Firefighters.

Random testing for illegal drug use, §25-4-11.1.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §§25-10-2, 25-10-2.1.

Immunity.

Drug overdoses.

Prescribing or administering opioid antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

Labeling.

Drug and cosmetic act.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

INDEX

DRUGS —Cont'd

Mail or other common carriers.

Use to dispense prescription drugs,
§26-4-60.

Marijuana.

Misbranding of drugs or devices,
§26-3-8.

Meat.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing
residue causing, §§26-2-180 to
26-2-186.

Milk and milk products.

Raw dairy act.

Drug residues found in milk, effect,
§26-2-455.

Narcotic treatment programs

enforcement act, §§26-5-40 to
26-5-62.

Overdose.

Immunity.

Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonists.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-1 to
26-4-179.

Prescriptions.

Hard copy prescription drug orders.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Use of security paper for, §26-4-80.1.

Security paper defined, §26-4-5.

Pharmacy provisions, §§26-4-80 to
26-4-90.

DRUGS AND NARCOTICS AGENCY,

§26-4-29.

Inspections and investigations on

**behalf of state board of
pharmacy,** §26-4-28.

DRUG STORES.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-110 to
26-4-119.

DRY-CLEANING FLUIDS.

Regulation of storage,

transportation, etc., §25-2-16.

DRY-PIPE SYSTEMS.

Fire protection sprinkler system

defined as including, §25-11-2.

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.

Powers of state board of pharmacy,

§26-4-5.

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

—Cont'd

Supplier license requirements,

§26-4-51.

DWELLINGS.

Smoke detectors required, §25-2-40.

DYES.

Hair dyes, §26-3-11.

DYNAMITE.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.

DYNAMITE CAPS.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

E

E COLI.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and
temperature standards, §26-2-458.

EDEMA.

Dropsy.

Advertisements.

Representing drug as having any
effect in dropsy.

When advertisement deemed
false, §26-3-13.

Laryngeal edema due to inhalation of superheated air.

Reports to safety fire division,
§25-2-32.1.

EDUCATION.

Drug abuse treatment and

education act.

General provisions, §§26-5-1 to
26-5-23.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Georgia fire academy act.

General provisions, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

EGGS, §§26-2-260 to 26-2-274.

Candlers.

Licenses, §26-2-272.

Temporary work without license,
§26-2-272.

Qualifications.

Promulgation of rules and
regulations, §26-2-272.

Cases.

Information labels affixed, §26-2-268.

Classification, §26-2-261.

Commissioner.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-267.

INDEX

EGGS —Cont'd

Confiscation and destruction of eggs found unfit for human consumption, §26-2-266.

Dealers.

Registration, §26-2-262.

Sales invoices.

Furnishing to department of agriculture, §26-2-265.

Unlawful sales, §26-2-264.

Wholesalers.

Defined, §26-2-260.

Definitions, §26-2-260.

Department of agriculture.

Sales invoices.

Furnishing to department upon request, §26-2-265.

Destruction.

Unfit for human consumption, §26-2-266.

Egg handlers.

Defined, §26-2-260.

Licenses, §26-2-263.

Fresh eggs.

Classifications, §26-2-261.

Grades, §26-2-261.

Handling requirements, §26-2-273.

Inspectors.

Assistants, §26-2-266.

Powers, §26-2-267.

Labels.

Containers, §26-2-261.

Information labels affixed to cases of eggs, §26-2-268.

Reciprocal marketing agreements to vary labeling requirements, §26-2-270.

Licenses.

Candlers and graders, §26-2-272.

Egg handlers and wholesalers, §26-2-263.

Exemption of producers from licensing, §26-2-264.

Placards.

Contents, §26-2-269.

Display, §26-2-269.

Reciprocal marketing agreements.

Labeling requirements, §26-2-270.

Refrigeration.

Requirements, §26-2-273.

Registration.

Wholesalers, retailers, dealers, etc., §26-2-262.

Retailers.

Registration, §26-2-262.

EGGS —Cont'd

Retailers —Cont'd

Unlawful sales, §26-2-264.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-267.

Candlers and graders, §26-2-272.

Sales.

Classification, §26-2-261.

Invoices.

Dealers' invoices furnished to department of agriculture, §26-2-265.

Placards, §26-2-269.

Unlawful sales by wholesalers, retailers, etc., §26-2-264.

Withhold from sale orders, §26-2-271.

Storage eggs.

Classifications, §26-2-261.

Taxation.

Exemption of producers from taxing and licensing, §26-2-264.

Unfit for human consumption.

Confiscation and destruction, §26-2-266.

Violations of provisions.

Duty of prosecuting attorney to prosecute, §26-2-274.

Misdemeanors, §26-2-274.

Withhold from sale orders, §26-2-271.

Wholesalers.

Defined, §26-2-260.

Licenses, §26-2-263.

Registration, §26-2-262.

Unlawful sales, §26-2-264.

Withhold from sale orders, §26-2-271.

EGRESS.

Landmark museum buildings.

Fire and other hazards.

Requirements, §25-2-13.

ELECTRIC POWER PLANTS.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

ELECTRONICALLY TRANSMITTED PRESCRIPTION DRUG ORDERS, §26-4-80.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION.

Prescription drug orders, §26-4-80.

EMAIL.

Prescription drug orders.

Electronic transmission, §26-4-80.

INDEX

EMBARGOES.

Adulterated or misbranded food,
§26-2-38.

EMERGENCIES.

Choking persons.

Food service establishments.
Relief from civil liability, §26-2-374.

Fire departments.

Federal agencies or officers.
Providing assistance to, §25-3-3.
Powers in event of emergencies,
§25-3-2.

Food service establishments.

Choking persons.
Relief from civil liability of persons
rendering emergency aid,
§26-2-374.

Good Samaritan law.

Immunity of persons rendering
emergency care.
Choking persons, §26-2-374.

Immunity.

Persons rendering emergency care.
Choking persons, §26-2-374.

Utility facility protection.

Applicability of provisions in
emergency, §25-9-12.
Definition of emergency, §25-9-3.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

Drug overdoses.

Administering opioid antagonists to
save life of person experiencing
overdose.
Immunity, §26-4-116.2.
Immunity.
Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonist, §26-4-116.2.

Overdoses.

Administering opioid antagonists to
save life of person experiencing
overdose.
Immunity, §26-4-116.2.
Immunity.
Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

Pharmacies, contracts with,
§26-4-116.

EMS AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS.

Emergencies.

Mutual aid.
Resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

ENDOSPERM.

Degerminated hominy grits.

Defined as including endosperm
portions of corn intended for
human consumption, §26-2-290.

EPIDEMICS.

Fire departments.

Assistance to government agencies
during emergencies, §25-3-3.

EPINEPHRINE.

**Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities,** §26-4-116.1.

**Places of public accommodation,
authority to stock,** §26-4-116.1.

Schools.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

ESOPHAGEAL CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

EVAPORATED MILK.

Milk and milk products generally,
§§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

EVIDENCE.

Meat inspection.

Access of commissioner to
documentary evidence, §26-2-81.

EXCAVATIONS.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.
Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

EXPLOSIVES AND EXPLOSIONS.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.
Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

Defined, §25-2-17.

Dynamite caps.

Minors.
Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Fireworks.

Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

INDEX

EXPLOSIVES AND EXPLOSIONS

—Cont'd

Manufacture.

Permits, §25-2-17.

Regulation, §25-2-17.

Minors.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Permits.

Manufacture, transportation, sale, etc., §25-2-17.

Use of explosives, §25-2-17.

Transportation.

Permits, §25-2-17.

Regulation, §25-2-17.

Use.

Permits.

Fees, §25-2-17.

Issuance, §25-2-17.

Regulation, §25-2-17.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

EXPRESS COMPANIES.

Depots.

Milk and milk products.

Unlawful acts, §26-2-249.

Milk and milk products.

Depots.

Unlawful acts, §26-2-249.

EXTINGUISHERS.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

EYEBROW DYES.

Cosmetics.

Adulteration.

Hair dye not to include eyebrow dyes, §26-3-11.

EYE DROPS.

Pharmacy refilling of prescription without authorization to prevent unintended interruptions in drug therapy, §26-4-80.

EYELASH DYES.

Cosmetics.

Adulteration.

Hair dye not to include eyelash dyes, §26-3-11.

F

FACSIMILE MACHINES.

Prescription drug orders.

Electronic transmission, §26-4-80.

FACTORIES.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.

Commissioner's right of entry, §26-2-36.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Inspections, §26-3-17.

Food and food products.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.

Commissioner's right of entry, §26-2-36.

FAMILY-STYLE MEALS, §26-2-373.

FATS.

Mixed edible fats.

Standards, §26-2-1.

FAX MACHINES.

Prescription drug orders.

Electronic transmission, §26-4-80.

FEES.

Amusement rides.

Permit fee.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Boiler and pressure vessels.

Inspection fees, §§25-15-25, 25-15-27.

Carnival license, §25-2-4.1.

Carnival rides.

Inspection fees, §25-15-83.

Permit fee.

Defined, §25-15-81.

Cigarette fire safety.

Certifications.

Fees for each cigarette listed, §25-14-4.

Explosives.

Permits.

Manufacture, transportation, sale, etc., §25-2-17.

Use of explosives, §25-2-17.

Fire academy.

Establishment, §25-7-7.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Disposition, §25-12-21.

Fire protection systems.

Certificate of competency, §25-11-4.

Deposit of fees collected, §25-11-15.

Designer license, §25-11-7.

Inspector license, §25-11-6.

Sprinkler contractor license, §25-11-5.

Fires.

Bulk storage facilities.

Plans and specifications, §25-2-16.

Public buildings.

Exemptions from fees or licenses, §25-2-18.

INDEX

FEES —Cont'd

Fires —Cont'd

- Safety fire commissioner, §25-2-4.1.
- State minimum fire safety standards.
 - Buildings presenting special hazards.
 - Certificates of occupancy, §25-2-14.
- Waiver.
- Churches and charities, §25-2-18.

Fireworks.

- Distributors of consumer fireworks.
- Licenses, §25-10-5.1.

Fish.

- Inspections, §26-2-312.

Food sales establishments.

- Licenses, §26-2-25.

Safety fire commissioner, §25-2-4.1.

FELONIES.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Drug researcher permit violations, §26-4-49.

Fire departments.

- Nomenclature, §25-13-10.

Fireworks.

- Violations of chapter, §25-10-8.

Food processing plants.

- Introduction of adulterated food into commerce, §26-2-27.1.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Unlawful practice, §26-4-40.
- Wholesale drug distributors, §26-4-115.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
- Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

FINES.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

- Civil penalties for violations, §25-15-31.

Bread and flour, §26-2-297.

Cigarette fire safety.

- Reports of testing.
 - Manufacturer failure to make copies available, §25-14-3.
- Sales in violation of provisions, civil penalties, §25-14-6.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Drug researcher permits, §26-4-49.

FINES —Cont'd

Fire departments.

- Nomenclature, §25-13-10.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

- License or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-18.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

- Violations of chapter.
- Penalties, §25-11-16.

Fireworks.

- Illegal sales, §25-10-9.
- Violations of chapter, §25-10-8.

Fish.

- Violation of provisions, §26-2-320.

Food processing plants.

- Introduction of adulterated food into commerce, §26-2-27.1.
- Testing of specimens from, §26-2-27.1.

Meat.

- Dog meat, §26-2-161.
- Horse meat, §26-2-161.

Meat inspection.

- Distribution of adulterated articles, §26-2-88.
- Fraud, §26-2-88.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Prescription medications integrity act, violations, §26-4-205.
- Unlawful practice, §26-4-40.
- Wholesale drug distributors, §26-4-115.

Prescription drugs.

- Prescription medications integrity act, violations, §26-4-205.

Seafood.

- Violation of provisions, §26-2-320.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
- Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

FINGERPRINTS.

Firefighters.

- Applicants, §25-4-8.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

- Background checks, §26-5-61.

Substance abuse.

- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
- Background checks, §26-5-61.

FIRE ACADEMY, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Advisory council.

- Compensation, §25-7-4.

FIRE ACADEMY —Cont'd

Advisory council —Cont'd

Creation, §25-7-4.

Selection of members, §25-7-4.

Board of public safety.

Defined, §25-7-3.

Gifts.

Acceptance, §25-7-6.

Powers and duties, §25-7-4.

Citation of chapter, §25-7-1.

Creation, §25-7-2.

Definitions.

Board, §25-7-3.

Department of public safety.

Administrative assignment to department, §25-7-6.

Fees.

Establishment, §25-7-7.

Gifts.

Acceptance, §25-7-6.

Grants.

Acceptance, §25-7-6.

Purposes, §25-7-2.

Short title, §25-7-1.

Superintendent.

Compensation, §25-7-4.

Duties, §25-7-5.

Responsibilities, §25-7-5.

Selection, §25-7-4.

Training programs.

Attendance.

Requirement, §25-7-8.

Effect upon other training programs, §25-7-8.

Eligibility, §25-7-7.

Fees, §25-7-7.

Requirement of attendance, §25-7-8.

FIRE ACADEMY ACT.

Georgia fire academy act.

General provisions, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Short title, §25-7-1.

FIRE ALARMS.

Automatic fire alarm systems using automatic smoke detectors.

Installation, §25-2-40.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS, §§25-3-1 to 25-3-27.

Advertising.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with advertising.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Appropriations.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §25-6-6.

Arson.

Powers and duties, §25-3-1.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS —Cont'd

Attorneys' fees.

Nomenclature.

Actions for civil damages for violations, §25-13-9.

Books.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with books.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Broadcasters.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with productions.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Cancer, members diagnosed with.

Insurance requirements, §25-3-23.

Counties.

Municipal fire departments.

Operating within unincorporated area of county, §25-3-5.

Damages.

Nomenclature.

Actions for civil damages for violations, §25-13-9.

Definitions.

Minimum requirements, §25-3-21.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Jurisdiction, §25-6-1.

Nomenclature, §25-13-3.

Emergencies.

Federal agencies or officers.

Providing assistance to, §25-3-3.

Powers in event of emergencies, §25-3-1.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Fireworks.

Consumer fireworks, distributors.

License requirements, §25-10-5.1.

Immunities.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Failure to respond for purposes of fires, etc., §25-6-5.

Firefighters employed by pacts, §25-6-5.

Injunctions.

Nomenclature.

Violations of provisions, §25-13-7.

Insurance.

Minimum requirements, §25-3-23.

Interpretation and construction.

Effect of article.

Powers and duties of other officials and departments, §25-3-6.

INDEX

FIRE DEPARTMENTS —Cont'd

Interpretation and construction

—Cont'd

Minimum requirements.

Construction of article, §25-3-27.

Minimum requirements, §§25-3-20 to 25-3-27.

Certificate of compliance.

Issuance, §25-3-22.

Revocation, §25-3-25.

Suspension, §25-3-25.

Clothing, §25-3-23.

Compliance with requirements.

Determination by executive director,
§25-3-24.

Duty of executive director to
cooperate with department,
§25-3-26.

Notice that organization meets
requirements, §25-3-22.

Definitions, §25-3-21.

Equipment, §25-3-23.

Executive director.

Authority to determine compliance,
§25-3-24.

Cooperation with fire department,
§25-3-26.

Defined, §25-3-21.

General requirements, §25-3-23.

Insurance, §25-3-23.

Intent of legislature, §25-3-20.

Interpretation and construction.

Construction of article, §25-3-27.

Legislative intent, §25-3-20.

Personnel, §25-3-23.

Motion pictures.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with productions.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Municipal corporations.

County fire departments.

Operation within municipality,
§25-3-5.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

Agreements with state and federal
agencies, §25-6-6.

Appropriations, §25-6-6.

Articles of association.

Adoption, §25-6-3.

Board of directors.

Election, §25-6-3.

Terms of office, §25-6-3.

Continuation of preexisting pacts,
§25-6-10.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS —Cont'd

Mutual aid resource pacts —Cont'd

Definitions.

Jurisdiction, §25-6-1.

Districts.

Communications between districts,
§25-6-9.

Cooperation between districts,
§25-6-9.

Establishment, §25-6-8.

Merger, §25-6-9.

Nonmember jurisdictions.

Participation in mutual aid,
§25-6-8.

Establishment of pacts, §25-6-3.

Formation of pacts.

Authorized, §25-6-2.

Gifts.

Acceptance, §25-6-6.

Intent of pact, §25-6-2.

Joining of pacts.

Jurisdiction not having fire
department, §25-6-7.

Jurisdiction.

Defined, §25-6-1.

Resolutions, §25-6-3.

Liability, §25-6-5.

Loss of men or equipment.

Liability, §25-6-5.

Meetings.

Organizational meeting, §25-6-3.

Officers, §25-6-3.

Penalties.

Violations of chapter, §25-6-11.

Powers and duties of pacts, §25-6-4.

Preexisting pacts.

Continuation of operation, §25-6-10.

Purpose of pact, §25-6-4.

Status of members of fire departments,
§25-6-2.

Violations of chapter.

Penalty, §25-6-11.

Withdrawal from pacts, §25-6-7.

Nomenclature act of 1996, §§25-13-1 to 25-13-10.

Attorneys' fees.

Actions for civil damages, §25-13-9.

Citation of act.

Short title, §25-13-1.

Damages.

Actions for violations, §25-13-9.

Definitions, §25-13-3.

Injunctions.

Violations of provisions, §25-13-7.

Legislative declaration, §25-13-2.

INDEX

FIRE DEPARTMENTS —Cont'd

Nomenclature act of 1996 —Cont'd

- Permission to use nomenclature or symbols.
- Procedure for obtaining, §25-13-6.
- Prohibited act.
- Symbols pertaining to particular fire department.
- Use in connection with solicitation, advertisement, publication or production, §25-13-5.
- Use of nomenclature in connection with solicitation, advertisement, publication or production, §25-13-4.
- Public policy, §25-13-2.
- Title of act.
- Short title, §25-13-1.
- Use of nomenclature or symbols.
- Permission.
- Procedure for obtaining, §25-13-6.
- Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.
- Violations of provisions.
- Civil penalties, §25-13-8.
- Criminal penalties, §25-13-10.
- Damages.
- Actions, §25-13-9.
- Injunctions, §25-13-7.
- Prohibited acts, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Ordinances.

- Authority of counties, municipalities, etc., §25-3-4.

Penalties.

- Nomenclature.
- Civil penalties for violations, §25-13-8.
- Criminal penalties for violations, §25-13-10.

Powers.

- Emergencies, §25-3-2.
- General provisions, §25-3-1.

Publication.

- Nomenclature and symbols.
- Use in connection with publication.
- Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Schools and education.

- Conducting programs in fire prevention and safety, §25-3-1.

Solicitation.

- Nomenclature and symbols.
- Use in connection with solicitation.
- Prohibited act, §25-13-4.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Administration of chapter.

- Grants and gifts.
- Acceptance, §25-12-21.

Commissioner.

- Delegation of authority, §25-12-20.

Compliance with chapter, §25-12-1.

Counties.

- Power to regulate not limited, §25-12-22.

Definitions, §25-12-2.

Delegation of authority by commissioner, §25-12-20.

Inspections.

- Licensed firm, §25-12-3.
- Permits.
- Individuals inspecting, §25-12-8.
- Portable fire extinguishers, §25-12-4.
- Fire chiefs, fire marshals or fire inspectors, §25-12-5.
- Self-owned fire suppression systems, §25-12-6.
- Visual inspections.
- Preengineered fire suppression systems.
- Fire chiefs, fire marshals or fire inspectors, §25-12-5.

Installation and servicing.

- Licensed firm, §25-12-3.
- Permits.
- Individuals, §25-12-8.
- Portable fire extinguishers, §25-12-4.
- Service tags.
- Specifications, §25-12-16.

Licenses.

- Amendment, §25-12-13.
- Applications.
- Forms, §25-12-10.
- Refusal.
- Grounds, §25-12-18.
- Duration, §25-12-9.
- Eligibility of applicant, §25-12-11.
- Installation, inspection, servicing or testing, §25-12-3.
- Fees, §25-12-7.
- Required, §25-12-7.
- Issuance.
- Requirement, §25-12-11.
- Production on demand, §25-12-14.
- Renewal.
- Failure to renew, §25-12-9.
- Required, §25-12-1.
- Suspension or revocation.
- Additional grounds, §25-12-18.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS

—Cont'd

Licenses —Cont'd

Suspension or revocation —Cont'd
Violations of chapter, §25-12-17.

Municipal corporations.

Power to regulate not limited,
§25-12-22.

Permits.

Amendment, §25-12-13.

Applications.

Forms, §25-12-10.

Refusal.

Grounds, §25-12-18.

Duration, §25-12-9.

Exemption from requirement,
§25-12-8.

Fees.

Nonrefundable filing fee, §25-12-12.

Individual installing, inspecting,
servicing or testing, §25-12-8.

Issuance.

Requirement, §25-12-12.

Production on demand, §25-12-14.

Renewal.

Failure to renew, §25-12-9.

Suspension or revocation.

Additional grounds, §25-12-18.

Violations of chapter, §25-12-17.

Portable fire extinguishers.

Defined, §25-12-2.

Installation and servicing, §25-12-4.

Service tags.

Specifications, §25-12-16.

Testing, §25-12-4.

Preengineered fire suppression systems.

Defined, §25-12-2.

Inspection.

Fire chiefs, fire marshals or fire
inspectors, §25-12-5.

Rules and regulations.

Standards for systems and
extinguishers, §25-12-15.

Self-owned fire suppression systems.

Visual inspection, §25-12-6.

Testing.

Licensed firm, §25-12-3.

Permits.

Individuals testing, §25-12-8.

Violations of chapter, §25-12-17.

Penalties, §25-12-19.

FIREFIGHTERS, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Airport firefighters.

Defined, §25-4-2.

FIREFIGHTERS —Cont'd

Certification.

Completion of training program,
§25-4-9.

Firefighters employed on July 1, 1971,
§25-4-12.

Transfer, §25-4-9.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Criminal data on applicant, §25-4-8.

Definitions.

Labor and employment relations,
§25-5-2.

Standards and training, §25-4-2.

Drugs.

Random testing for illegal drug use,
§25-4-11.1.

Fingerprints.

Applicants, §25-4-8.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Fire safety standard and firefighter protection act.

Cigarette fire safety generally,
§§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Labor and employment relations,

§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Applicability of chapter, §25-5-14.

Collective bargaining.

Agreements constituting contract,
§25-5-12.

Contracts.

Limitation as to duration, §25-5-6.

Reduction of agreement to written
contract, §25-5-6.

Obligation of corporate authority
and agent, §25-5-6.

Requests.

Service of process, §25-5-13.

Rights of firefighters, §25-5-4.

Selection of bargaining agents,
§25-5-5.

Service of notice for request for,
§25-5-13.

Unresolved issues.

Submission to mediation, §25-5-7.

Contracts.

Duration of contract, §25-5-6.

Reduction of agreement to written
contract, §25-5-6.

Declaration of public policy, §25-5-3.

Definitions, §25-5-2.

Interpretation and construction.

Applicability of chapter, §25-5-14.

Labor organizations.

Representation by, §25-5-4.

FIREFIGHTERS —Cont'd

Labor and employment relations —Cont'd

Labor organizations —Cont'd

Selection of bargaining agents, §25-5-5.

Mediation, §§25-5-7 to 25-5-11.
Board.

Chairman, §25-5-8.

Composition, §25-5-8.

Decisions.

Effect, §25-5-9.

Factors to be considered in reaching, §25-5-10.

Hearings, §25-5-9.

Opinions, §25-5-9.

Selection, §25-5-8.

Decisions.

Effect, §25-5-9.

Factors to be considered in reaching, §25-5-10.

Expenses, §25-5-11.

Payment of expenses, §25-5-11.

Submission of unresolved issues, §25-5-7.

Policy of state, §25-5-3.

Short title of chapter, §25-5-1.

Strikes, §25-5-12.

Work stoppages.

Engaging in by firefighters, §25-5-12.

Leaves of absence.

Authorized leaves, §25-4-10.

Volunteer firefighters, §25-4-10.

Military training, counting toward completion of certification of firefighter training, §25-4-9.

Qualifications, §25-4-8.

Random testing for illegal drug use, §25-4-11.1.

Schools and education.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Qualifications of applicants, §25-4-8.

Short title.

Firefighters standards and training act, §25-4-1.

Standards and training council,

§§25-4-3 to 25-4-7.1.

Advisory committee, §25-4-3.

Appointment, §25-4-3.

Assignment to department of public safety, §25-4-5.

Composition, §25-4-3.

Establishment, §25-4-3.

Executive director, §25-4-7.1.

FIREFIGHTERS —Cont'd

Standards and training council —Cont'd

Expenses.

Reimbursement, §25-4-3.

Functions, §25-4-7.

Funds.

Source of funds, §25-4-5.

Gifts.

Authority to accept, §25-4-5.

Meetings, §25-4-6.

Officers, §25-4-3.

Powers, §25-4-7.

Public office.

Disqualification from holding public office, §25-4-4.

Membership does not constitute, §25-4-4.

Qualifications of members, §25-4-3.

Quorum, §25-4-6.

Reports.

Annual report, §25-4-6.

Rules for transaction of business, adopting, §25-4-6.

Staff, §25-4-7.1.

Terms of office, §25-4-3.

Vacancies in office, §25-4-3.

Training.

Adoption of higher training requirements.

Employing agencies, §25-4-11.

Applicability of chapter, §25-4-12.

Basic training course, §25-4-9.

Volunteer firefighters, §25-4-9.

Higher training requirements.

Adoption by employing agencies, §25-4-11.

Mandatory annual training, §25-4-10.

Volunteer firefighters, §25-4-10.

Standards and training council, §§25-4-3 to 25-4-7.1.

Volunteer firefighters.

Criminal conviction, effect on qualifications, §25-4-8.1.

Georgia volunteer fire service council.

Administrative attachment to department of public safety, §25-4-5.

Advisory committees, §25-4-3.1.

Conduct of business, §25-4-6.

Eligibility of members for public office, §25-4-4.

Established, §25-4-3.1.

Executive director of standards and training council, duties toward volunteer council, §25-4-7.1.

FIREFIGHTERS —Cont'd

Volunteer firefighters —Cont'd

Georgia volunteer fire service council
—Cont'd

Functions and powers, §25-4-7.

Members, §25-4-3.1.

Officers, §25-4-3.1.

Terms of office, §25-4-3.1.

Training and certification by,
§25-4-9.

Minimum requirements for operation
of fire department, §§25-3-20 to
25-3-27.

Qualifications, §25-4-8.1.

Training.

Basic training course, §25-4-9.

Mandatory annual training,
§25-4-10.

FIREFIGHTER'S MEDIATION ACT.

General provisions.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Short title, §25-5-1.

**FIREFIGHTER STANDARDS AND
TRAINING ACT.**

**Georgia firefighters standards and
training act.**

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

Short title, §25-4-1.

FIREFIGHTING FOAM.

**Use of Class B firefighting foam with
PFAS chemicals,** §25-2-41.

FIRE HYDRANTS.

Fireworks.

Retailers of consumer fireworks,
temporary retail sales stands,
§25-10-2.

FIRE LOSS.

Records, §§25-2-12, 25-2-32, 25-2-33.

FIRE MARSHALS.

Fires.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes,
standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors,
code officials, etc, enforcement
authority, §25-2-14.2.

Local fire marshals, §25-2-12.1.

FIRE PREVENTION CODE.

Ordinances.

Authority of counties, municipalities,
etc., §25-3-4.

FIRE PROTECTION AND SAFETY.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Regulation of blasting operations
generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Explosives.

Fireworks.

Regulation of fireworks, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

Regulation of blasting operations
generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Fire extinguishers.

Regulation of fire extinguishers and
suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to
25-12-22.

Firefighter standards and training.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

Fire protection sprinkler

contractors, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Fireworks.

Regulation of fireworks, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

Georgia fire academy, §§25-7-1 to
25-7-8.

Labor and employment relations.

Resolution of wages, hours, working
conditions, etc., of firefighters,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Local fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to 25-3-6.

Minimum requirements, §§25-3-20 to
25-3-27.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1
to 25-6-11.

**Regulation, etc., of fire and other
hazards to persons and property
generally,** §§25-2-1 to 25-2-41.

**Regulation of blasting operations
generally,** §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

**Regulation of fire protection
systems and professionals,**
§§25-11-1 to 25-11-19. See FIRE
SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS.

FIRES.

Apartments.

Fire hazards.

Regulation, §25-2-19.

Appeals.

Safety fire commissioner.

Rulings or decisions, §25-2-10.

State fire marshal.

Rulings or decisions, §25-2-10.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.

INDEX

FIRES —Cont'd

Bulk storage facilities.

Plans and specifications.

Submission and approval, §25-2-16.

Carnivals.

Licenses.

Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Churches and charities.

Waiver of fees, §25-2-18.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Circuses.

Licenses.

Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, use, §25-2-41.

Code officials.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

Counties.

State fire safety standards.

Adoption, §25-2-12.

Enforcement.

Buildings presenting special hazards, §25-2-12.

Definitions.

Commissioner, §25-2-1.

Local fire marshals, §25-2-12.1.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Regulation of blasting operations generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Exit doors.

Locking.

Unlawful acts, §25-2-37.

Explosives.

Regulation, §25-2-17.

Blasting operations generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Fees.

Bulk storage facilities.

Plans and specifications, §25-2-16.

Safety fire commissioner, §25-2-4.1.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Fire and life safety codes.

Enactment of ordinances.

Authority of counties, municipalities, etc., §25-3-4.

Fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to 25-3-27.

FIRES —Cont'd

Fire departments —Cont'd

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

General provisions, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Firefighters.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Firefighting foam.

Use of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, §25-2-41.

Fire safety standard and firefighter protection act.

Cigarette fire safety generally, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Fireworks.

Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

Georgia fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Hazardous materials.

Storage, transportation and handling.

Regulation, §25-2-16.

Hearings.

Safety fire commissioner.

Conduct of hearings, §25-2-29.

Hotels and other lodging places.

Fire hazards.

Regulation, §25-2-19.

Immunities.

State, political subdivisions, etc.

Carrying out provisions of chapter, §25-2-38.1.

Injunctions.

Violations of chapter and rules, §25-2-36.

Injuries.

Serious burn injuries.

Reports to safety fire division, §25-2-32.1.

Investigation of reported injuries, §25-2-32.2.

Inspection of buildings or premises.

Correction of unsafe conditions.

City or county upon failure to comply with order.

Expenses, §25-2-25.

INDEX

FIRES —Cont'd

Inspection of buildings or premises

—Cont'd

Correction of unsafe conditions

—Cont'd

Enforcement of provisions, §25-2-26.

Issuance of notice, §25-2-23.

Petition for court order compelling compliance, §25-2-24.

Right to enter and inspect, §25-2-22.

State inspectors.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

Warrants, §25-2-22.1.

Interpretation and construction.

Construction of chapter, §25-2-39.

Investigations.

Burn injuries.

Serious burn injuries reported to safety fire division, §25-2-32.2.

State fire marshal and employees.

Authority to investigate cause and origin, §25-2-9.

Local fire marshals, §25-2-12.1.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

Losses.

Records, §25-2-32.

Motion pictures.

Traveling motion picture shows.

Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Municipal corporations.

State fire safety standards, §25-2-12.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Fire departments, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

Notice to correct unsafe conditions, §25-2-23.

Public buildings.

Exemptions from fees or licenses, §25-2-18.

Reports.

Incidents of fire.

Reports to safety fire commissioner, §25-2-32.

FIRES —Cont'd

Reports —Cont'd

Serious burn injuries.

Reports to safety fire division, §25-2-32.1.

Investigation of reported injuries, §25-2-32.2.

Rules and regulations.

Safety fire commissioner.

Adoption, §25-2-4.

Safety fire commissioner, §§25-15-1 to 25-15-110.

Amusement ride safety.

Generally, §§25-15-50 to 25-15-69.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Regulation of boilers and pressure vessels generally, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

Carnival rides.

Regulation generally, §§25-15-80 to 25-15-101.

Commissioner defined, §25-2-1.

Commissioner of insurance, §25-2-2.

Department of public safety.

Cooperation with commissioner, §25-2-34.

Duties.

Generally, §25-2-3.

Fees and charges, §25-2-4.1.

Fireworks.

Cease and desist orders for violations, §25-10-11.

Distributors of consumer fireworks, licenses, §25-10-5.1.

Injunctions, authority to seek, §25-10-11.

Georgia bureau of investigation.

Cooperation with commissioner, §25-2-34.

Georgia state patrol.

Cooperation with commissioner, §25-2-34.

Hearings.

Conduct, §25-2-29.

Office created, §25-2-2.

Successor to department of labor, §25-15-1.

Powers.

Amusement rides, consulting on, §25-15-52.

Boilers and pressure vessels, consulting on, §25-15-12.

Carnival rides, consulting on, §25-15-82.

Delegation, §25-2-3.

INDEX

FIRES —Cont'd

Safety fire commissioner —Cont'd

- Responsibilities, §25-2-3.
- Right of entry.
 - Inspection of buildings and premises, §25-2-22.
- Rules and regulations.
 - Adoption, §25-2-4.
- Rulings or decisions.
 - Appeal, §25-2-10.
- Scaffolding and staging design.
 - Inspection, §25-15-110.
- Smoke detectors.
 - Free smoke detectors for those in need, §25-2-40.
- Successor to department of labor,
 - §25-15-1.

Schools and education.

- Fire prevention programs, §25-2-31.

Self-service gasoline stations.

- Definitions, §25-2-16.
- Hold-open latches.
- Use, §25-2-16.

Sheriffs.

- Assistance in determining cause of fire.
- Payment, §25-2-35.

Smoke detectors.

- Dwellings and dwelling units.
- Required, §25-2-40.

Sovereign immunity.

- Carrying out provisions of chapter,
 - §25-2-38.1.

State fire marshal.

- Administrative fire safety specialists.
 - Appointment, §25-2-7.
- Appointment, §25-2-5.
- Arrest.
 - Authority, §25-2-9.
- Arson investigations, §25-2-27.
- Deputy state fire marshal.
 - Appointment, §25-2-7.
- Duties.
 - Promotion of fire prevention,
 - §25-2-30.
- Fire departments.
 - Powers and duties of fire marshal not affected by provisions,
 - §25-3-6.
- Fire losses.
 - Information.
 - Release on request by fire marshal, §25-2-33.
 - Records.
 - Maintenance, §25-2-32.

FIRES —Cont'd

State fire marshal —Cont'd

- Fire losses —Cont'd
 - Reports of arson and suspected arson to fire marshal,
 - §25-2-33.1.
 - Fire prevention.
 - Dissemination of information,
 - §25-2-31.
 - Duties as to promotion of, §25-2-30.
 - Fireworks.
 - Enforcement of provisions, §25-10-6.
 - Head of safety fire division, §25-2-6.
 - Investigations.
 - Authority to investigate cause and origin, §25-2-9.
 - Local fire marshals.
 - Deputizing of state officer,
 - §25-2-12.1.
 - Personnel.
 - Employment, §25-2-7.
 - Expenses.
 - Payment, §25-2-8.
 - Transportation.
 - Payment of expenses, §25-2-8.
 - Qualifications, §25-2-5.
 - Records.
 - Fire losses.
 - Maintenance of records, §25-2-32.
 - Right of entry.
 - Inspection of buildings and premises, §25-2-22.
 - Rulings or decisions.
 - Appeal, §25-2-10.
 - Salary, §25-2-5.
 - State minimum fire safety standards.
 - Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.
 - Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.
 - Subpoenas.
 - Power to issue, §25-2-28.
 - Traveling carnivals, circuses and shows.
 - Licensing, §25-2-20.
 - Weapons.
 - Authority to carry, §25-2-9.
- #### **State minimum fire safety standards.**
- Buildings presenting special hazards.
 - Building permits, §25-2-14.
 - Certificates of occupancy, §25-2-14.
 - Compliance with minimum fire safety standards, §25-2-14.1.
 - Time limit for compliance,
 - §25-2-15.

FIRES —Cont'd

State minimum fire safety standards

—Cont'd

Buildings presenting special hazards

—Cont'd

Conflict of laws, §25-2-13.

Construction, maintenance, etc.,
§25-2-13.

Definition, §25-2-13.

Existing and proposed buildings and
structures.

Compliance with minimum fire
safety standards, §25-2-14.1.

Permits.

Temporary occupancy permits,
§25-2-15.

Plan review or inspection, §25-2-14.

Private professional providers.

Plan review and inspection by,
§25-2-14.

Substandard conditions.

Temporary occupancy permits,
§25-2-15.

Time limits for compliance with
chapter, §25-2-15.

Violations of provisions.

Unlawful acts, §25-2-37.

Counties.

Adoption, §25-2-12.

Enforcement.

Buildings presenting special
hazards, §25-2-12.

Interpretation.

Office of commissioner, §25-2-12.

Municipal corporations.

Adoption, §25-2-12.

Enforcement.

Buildings presenting special
hazards, §25-2-12.

Noncompliance with codes, standards,
etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code
officials, etc, enforcement
authority, §25-2-14.2.

Violations of provisions.

Injunctions, §25-2-36.

Penalties.

Civil penalty, §25-2-37.

Criminal penalties, §25-2-38.

Warehouses.

Fire hazards.

Regulation, §25-2-19.

Warrants.

Inspection warrants, §25-2-22.1.

Weapons.

State fire marshal.

Authority to carry, §25-2-9.

**FIRE SAFETY STANDARD AND
FIREFIGHTER PROTECTION
ACT.**

**Georgia fire safety standard and
firefighter protection act.**

Cigarette fire safety generally,
§§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Short title, §25-14-1.

FIRE SPRINKLER ACT.

Georgia fire sprinkler act.

General provisions, §§25-11-1 to
25-11-19.

Short title, §25-11-1.

FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS,

§§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Administrative procedure.

Enforcement of provisions, §25-11-16.

Certificate of competency.

Application, §25-11-4.

Building permit.

Proof of contractor's competency as
requirement, §25-11-13.

Defined, §25-11-2.

Fees, §25-11-4.

Installations and repairs.

Performance of supervision by
certificate holder, §25-11-8.

Nonrenewal to discipline, §25-11-17.

Renewal, §25-11-4.

Failure to renew, §25-11-18.

Revocation, §§25-11-16, 25-11-17.

Suspension, §25-11-17.

Citation of chapter, §25-11-1.

Commissioner.

Delegation of authority, §25-11-3.

Forms.

Prescribing, §25-11-12.

Powers and duties, §25-11-3.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation, §25-11-12.

Contact information.

Failure to promptly update
commissioner.

Discipline, §25-11-17.

Counties.

Applicability of chapter to work
performed for, §25-11-14.

Contract and bid requirements,
§25-11-14.

Definitions, §25-11-2.

Enforcement of chapter, §25-11-3.

Exemptions from chapter, §25-11-19.

Fees.

Certificate of competency, §25-11-4.

INDEX

FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS

—Cont'd

Fees —Cont'd

- Deposit of fees collected, §25-11-15.
- Sprinkler contractor license, §25-11-5.
- System designer license, §25-11-7.
- System inspector license, §25-11-6.

Grants.

- Acceptance of grants for administration of chapter, §25-11-15.

Inspections.

- Defined, §25-11-2.
- Individuals authorized to inspect and maintain systems, §25-11-11.

Installation or repair.

- Performed or supervised by certificate holder, §25-11-8.
- Underground facilities or piping connections.
 - License, §25-11-13.

Insurance.

- Requirements, §25-11-4.

Licenses.

- Applications, §25-11-5.
- Fees.
 - Sprinkler contractor license, §25-11-5.
 - System designer license, §25-11-7.
 - System inspector license, §25-11-6.
- Fire protection system designer license, §25-11-7.
 - Defined, §25-11-2.
 - Preparation of water-based fire protection system documents for construction by designers.
 - Licensed fire protection system designers only, §25-11-10.
- Fire protection system inspector license, §25-11-6.
 - Defined, §25-11-2.
- Locations.
 - Licensing of each location, §25-11-5.
- Nonrenewal, §25-11-17.
- Renewal.
 - Failure to renew, §25-11-18.
- Required.
 - Discipline for unlicensed work, §25-11-17.
- Revocation, §§25-11-16, 25-11-17.
- Suspension, §25-11-17.
- Underground facilities or piping connections.
 - Installation or repair, §25-11-13.

FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS

—Cont'd

Maintenance.

- Defined, §25-11-2.
- Individuals authorized to inspect and maintain systems, §25-11-11.

Municipal corporations.

- Applicability of chapter to work performed for, §25-11-14.
- Contract and bid requirements, §25-11-14.

Rules and regulations.

- Promulgation, §25-11-12.

Shop drawings.

- Water-based fire protection shop drawings.
 - Review, §25-11-9.

Short title of chapter, §25-11-1.

Single-family dwellings.

- Exemptions from provisions, §25-11-19.

State.

- Applicability of chapter to work performed for, §25-11-14.
- Contract and bid requirements, §25-11-14.

Underground facilities of piping connections.

- Installation or repair.
 - License, §25-11-13.

Unlicensed work.

- Discipline for unlicensed work, §25-11-17.

Violations of chapter.

- Cease and desist orders, §25-11-16.
- Penalties, §25-11-16.

Water-based fire protection shop drawings.

- Review, §25-11-9.

Water-based fire protection systems.

- Documents.
 - Preparation for construction by designers, §25-11-10.
- Underground facilities or piping connecting to.
 - Valid license required for installation or repair, §25-11-13.

FIREWORKS, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

Applicability of chapter, §25-10-7.

Bonds, surety.

- Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.

Cease and desist orders for violations, §25-10-11.

FIREWORKS —Cont'd

Child labor.

- Storage or public displays of fireworks.
- Employment of persons under age 18 in connection with, §25-10-4.1.

Consumer fireworks.

- Contraband, seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.
- Distributors.
 - License required, §25-10-5.1.
 - Permitted activities, §25-10-2.
- Lawful and unlawful activities generally, §25-10-2.
- Locations where consumer fireworks not to be used, §25-10-2.
- Operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.
- Violations of chapter.
 - Enforcement authority, §25-10-6.

Contraband.

- Public displays.
 - Excess fireworks, §25-10-4.
- Violations of chapter.
 - Seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Definitions, §25-10-1.

Displays.

- Licenses.
 - Pyrotechnics exhibits, §25-10-3.2.
 - Expiration, §25-10-5.
 - Fees, §25-10-5.
- Minors.
 - Employment of persons under age 18 in connection with public displays, §25-10-4.1.
- Permits, §25-10-4.

Disposition and seizures.

- Contraband.
 - Violations of chapter, §25-10-6.

Distributors, §25-10-2.

- License required, §25-10-5.1.

Exclusions from definition of fireworks, §25-10-1.

Exemptions from chapter, §25-10-7.

Fines.

- Illegal sales, §25-10-9.
- Violations of chapter, §25-10-8.

Fire-propelled devices.

- Use for lighting effect in water locations, prohibitions, §25-10-10.

Floating water lanterns.

- Use of devices using fire for propulsion, prohibitions, §25-10-10.

Injunctions, authority of safety fire commissioner, §25-10-11.

FIREWORKS —Cont'd

Inspections.

- Manufacture, storage and transportation.
 - Inspection of facilities, §25-10-5.

Insurance.

- Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.
- License revocation, suspension or nonrenewal.
 - Failure to comply with requirements, §25-10-12.

Lanterns.

- Use of devices using fire for propulsion, prohibitions, §25-10-10.

Lawful use, §25-10-2.

Licenses.

- Distributors of consumer fireworks, §25-10-5.1.
- Manufacture, storage and transportation.
 - Fees, §25-10-5.
 - Required, §25-10-5.
- Pyrotechnics exhibits, §25-10-3.2.
 - Expiration, §25-10-5.
 - Fees, §25-10-5.
- Revocation, suspension or nonrenewal.
 - Cease and desist order violation, §25-10-11.
 - Failure to comply with requirements, §25-10-12.

Manufacturing.

- Inspection of facilities, §25-10-5.
- Licenses, §25-10-5.
- Violations of chapter.
 - Contraband.
 - Seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Minors.

- Restrictions on consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.
- Storage or public displays of fireworks.
 - Employment of persons under age 18 in connection with, §25-10-4.1.

Noise restrictions on consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

Operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.

Permits.

- Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.
- Prohibited activities, §25-10-2.

Proximate audience.

- Defined, §25-10-1.

Pyrotechnics.

- Defined, §25-10-1.

FIREWORKS —Cont'd

Pyrotechnics exhibits.

Licenses required, §25-10-3.2.

Expiration, §25-10-5.

Fees, §25-10-5.

Retailers of consumer fireworks,
§25-10-2.

Distributors, license requirements,
§25-10-5.1.

Temporary retail sales stands,
§25-10-2.

Sales.

Distributors, license requirements,
§25-10-5.1.

Permitted sales, §25-10-3.

Prohibited acts, §25-10-2.

Penalty, §25-10-9.

Temporary retail sales stands,
§25-10-2.

Tent, canopy or membrane structure,
penalty for selling from, §25-10-9.

Violations of chapter.

Contraband.

Seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Signs.

Distributors of consumer fireworks.

Signage required, §25-10-5.1.

Sparklers.

Exceptions to definition of fireworks,
§25-10-1.

Sales.

Prohibited acts, §25-10-2.

**Stands, operation for retail sale of
consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.**

Distributors, license requirements,
§25-10-5.1.

**State fire marshal, enforcement of
provisions, §25-10-6.**

Storage.

Inspection of facilities, §25-10-5.

Licensed nonmanufacturers,
§25-10-3.1.

Licenses, §25-10-5.

Minors.

Employment of persons under age
18 in connection with storage,
§25-10-4.1.

Temporary retail sales stands.

Distributors.

Licenses.

Fees, §25-10-5.1.

**Tent, canopy or membrane
structure, penalty for selling
from, §25-10-9.**

Times when use permitted, §25-10-2.

FIREWORKS —Cont'd

Transportation.

Consumer fireworks, restrictions,
§25-10-2.

Inspection of facilities, §25-10-5.

Licenses for storage, §25-10-5.

Use.

Permitted use, §25-10-3.

Prohibited acts, §25-10-2.

Violations of chapter.

Cease and desist orders, §25-10-11.

Contraband.

Seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Penalties, §25-10-8.

Water locations.

Use of devices using fire for
propulsion, prohibition, §25-10-10.

Wish lanterns.

Use of devices using fire for
propulsion, prohibitions,
§25-10-10.

FISH, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

Administration of article, §26-2-311.

Commissioner.

Administration of article, §26-2-311.

Definitions, §26-2-310.

Distribution.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

Foreign dealers.

Inspection of fish imported by foreign
and alien dealers, §26-2-312.

Inspections, §26-2-318.

Fees, §26-2-312.

Fish imported by foreign or alien
dealers, §26-2-312.

Licenses.

Wholesale fish dealers, §26-2-312.

Applications, §26-2-313.

Revocation, §26-2-314.

Rules and regulations.

Sanitation, distribution and
transportation.

Promulgation by commissioner,
§26-2-315.

Sanitation.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

Suitable equipment for wholesale fish
dealers, §26-2-316.

Traveling fish dealers, §26-2-317.

Transportation.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

Traveling fish dealers.

Equipment, §26-2-317.

Violation of provisions.

Fines, §26-2-320.

INDEX

FISH —Cont'd

Violation of provisions —Cont'd

Terms of imprisonment, §26-2-320.

Wholesale fish dealers.

Defined, §26-2-310.

Licenses, §26-2-312.

Applications, §26-2-313.

Revocation, §26-2-314.

Sanitation, §26-2-316.

Suitable equipment, §26-2-316.

FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS.

Fires and fire prevention.

Regulation of storage, transportation, etc., §25-2-16.

Unsafe conditions.

Issuance of notice to correct,
§25-2-23.

FLAMMABLE MATERIALS.

Fires and fire prevention.

Investigations.

Authority of commissioner, §25-2-16.

Storage, transportation, etc.

Regulation, §25-2-16.

FLAVORING.

Adulterated food, §26-2-26.

Bottled soft drink.

Defined, §26-2-350.

Misbranded defined, §26-2-62.

Misbranded food, §26-2-20.

FLOUR.

Bread and flour, §§26-2-290 to
26-2-297.

FOAM.

**Use of Class B firefighting foam with
PFAS chemicals,** §25-2-41.

FOOD.

Adulteration and misbranding,

§§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Acts prohibited, §26-2-22.

Injunctions, §26-2-23.

Penalties, §26-2-24.

Advertisements.

Misleading advertisements,
§§26-2-29, 26-2-30.

Citation of article, §26-2-20.

Commissioner.

Employment of personnel, §26-2-33.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-33.

Promulgation of regulations,
§§26-2-34, 26-2-35.

Right of entry in food
establishments and transport
vehicles, §26-2-36.

FOOD —Cont'd

Adulteration and misbranding

—Cont'd

Confidential information obtained by
department, §26-2-34.1.

Definitions, §26-2-21.

Detention or embargo of adulterated
or misbranded food, §26-2-38.

Embargoes.

Adulterated or misbranded food,
§26-2-38.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-33.

Factors to be considered, §26-2-26.

Federal food safety modernization act,
cooperation in implementation,
§§26-2-440, 26-2-441.

Food processing plants.

Testing of specimens from,
§26-2-27.1.

Failure to comply with
requirements prohibited,
§26-2-22.

Food sales establishments.

Defined, §26-2-21.

Licenses.

Fees, §26-2-25.

Required, §26-2-25.

Revocation, §26-2-25.

Transferability, §26-2-25.

Right of entry, §26-2-36.

Fraud, dissemination of information as
protection against, §26-2-39.

Honey.

Imitation honey labels, §26-2-32.

Injunctions.

Violations, §26-2-23.

Judgments, decrees, and orders
rendered.

Publication of summary reports,
§26-2-39.

Labels.

Honey and imitation honey labels,
§26-2-32.

When food deemed misbranded,
§26-2-28.

Minor violations of article, §26-2-40.

Notices.

Defendant notified prior to
institution of criminal
proceedings, §26-2-41.

Permits.

Temporary permits, §26-2-37.

Poisonous or deleterious substances in
food, §26-2-27.

Prohibited acts, §26-2-22.

Injunctions, §26-2-23.

FOOD —Cont'd

Adulteration and misbranding

—Cont'd

Prohibited acts —Cont'd

Penalties, §26-2-24.

Regulations.

Promulgation by commissioner,
§§26-2-34, 26-2-35.

Short title of article, §26-2-20.

Violations.

Minor violations of article, §26-2-40.

Notice to defendant prior to
institution of criminal
proceedings, §26-2-41.

Prosecutions, §26-2-41.

Waiver or variance to rule causing
substantial hardship, §26-2-34.

When deemed adulterated, §26-2-26.

When food deemed misbranded,
§26-2-28.

Advertising.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Misleading advertisements,
§§26-2-29, 26-2-30.

Bait and switch, §26-2-152.

Plant-based meat, advertising
requirements, §26-2-152.

Charities.

Donation.

Inspection of donated food, §26-1-1.

Maintenance of information and
referral service, §26-1-1.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers,
distributors, sellers, packers, etc.

Weight gain or obesity, §§26-2-430 to
26-2-436.

Cottonseed oils.

Standards, §26-2-1.

Definitions.

Adulteration and misbranding,
§26-2-21.

Nonprofit food sales and food service,
§26-2-390.

Eggs.

General provisions, §§26-2-260 to
26-2-274.

Embargoes.

Adulterated or misbranded food,
§26-2-38.

Fats.

Mixed edible fats.

Standards, §26-2-1.

**Federal food safety modernization
act, cooperation in
implementation.**

Definitions, §26-2-440.

FOOD —Cont'd

**Federal food safety modernization
act, cooperation in
implementation —Cont'd**

Designation of cooperating agency,
§26-2-441.

Fish, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

Food service establishments,
§§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

Fraud.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Dissemination of information for
protection against consumer
fraud, §26-2-39.

Honey.

Labels.

Honey and imitation honey labels,
§26-2-32.

When food deemed misbranded,
§26-2-28.

Injunctions.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Violations, §26-2-23.

Inspections.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Right of entry of commissioner,
§26-2-36.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to
26-2-133.

Obstruction of inspectors, §26-2-3.

**Judgments, decrees, and orders
regarding adulteration and
misbranding of food.**

Publication of summary reports,
§26-2-39.

Lard.

Standards, §26-2-1.

Licenses.

Food sales establishments, §26-2-25.

Meat.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing
residue causing, §§26-2-180 to
26-2-186.

Inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to
26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing
plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Milk and milk products.

General provisions, §§26-2-230 to
26-2-250.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing
plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

INDEX

FOOD —Cont'd

Milk and milk products —Cont'd

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

Nonprofit food sales and food

service, §§26-2-390 to 26-2-393.

Definitions, §26-2-390.

Enforcement of provisions, §26-2-393.

Handwashing facility.

Requirement, §26-2-392.

Permits, §26-2-391.

Enforcement by county or
municipality issuing permit,
§26-2-393.

Requirements, §26-2-392.

Temperature requirements for foods,
§26-2-392.

Obesity.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers,
distributors, sellers, packers,
etc, §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

Permits.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.

Temporary permits, §26-2-37.

Nonprofit food sales and food service,
§26-2-391.

Enforcement by county or
municipality issuing permit,
§26-2-393.

Poisons.

Adulteration or misbranding.

Addition of poisonous or deleterious
substances in food, §26-2-27.

Poultry.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing
plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing
plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

Rules and regulations.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Promulgation, §§26-2-34, 26-2-35.

Safety plan.

Food processing plants, §26-2-27.1.

Sale of meat, poultry or seafood from mobile vehicles.

Definitions, §26-2-410.

Inspection of vehicle, §26-2-411.

Licensing of vehicle, §26-2-411.

Rulemaking, §26-2-412.

Violations, §26-2-413.

Seafood, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

Soft drinks, §§26-2-350 to 26-2-357.

FOOD —Cont'd

Temperature requirements for foods.

Nonprofit food sales and food service,
§26-2-392.

Weight gain.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers,
distributors, sellers, packers,
etc, §§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

FOOD ACT.

Georgia food act.

General provisions.

Adulteration and misbranding,
§§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Short title, §26-2-20.

FOOD, DRUGS AND COSMETICS.

Drug abuse treatment and

education programs, §§26-5-1 to
26-5-23.

Food donations, §26-1-1.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Poisons, §§26-4-160 to 26-4-163.

State board of pharmacy, §§26-4-20 to
26-4-30.

Third-party prescription programs,
§§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Standards, labeling and adulteration of drugs and cosmetics, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Standards, labeling and adulteration of food.

Adulteration and misbranding of food,
§§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Advertisement and sale of meat
generally, §§26-2-150 to 26-2-161.

Animals suspected of bearing any
residue causing contaminated
meat, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

Eggs, §§26-2-260 to 26-2-274.

Fish and other seafood, §§26-2-310 to
26-2-320.

Food service establishments,
§§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

General provisions, §§26-2-1 to 26-2-4.

Grains and bread, §§26-2-290 to
26-2-297.

Meat inspection.

Enforcement of article, §§26-2-80 to
26-2-88.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to
26-2-64.

Inspection, handling and labeling
standards, §§26-2-100 to
26-2-116.

FOOD, DRUGS AND COSMETICS

—Cont'd

Standards, labeling and adulteration of food —Cont'd

Meat inspection —Cont'd

Meat processors and related industries, §§26-2-130 to 26-2-133.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Milk and milk products, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

Soft drinks, §§26-2-350 to 26-2-357.

FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT.

Cooperation in implementation of federal act.

Definitions, §26-2-440.

Designation of cooperating agency, §26-2-441.

FOOD SERVICE

ESTABLISHMENTS, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

Appeals.

Final order or determination by department of public health.

Review, §26-2-376.

Choking.

Civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid, §26-2-374.

Notices relating to assistance, §26-2-374.

County boards of health.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-375.

Hair nets or hats.

Use by food preparers.

Authority to impose penalties for violations, §26-2-373.1.

Promulgation of rules, regulations and standards, §26-2-373.

Definitions, §26-2-370.

Department of public health.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-375.

Promulgation of rules, regulations and standards, §26-2-373.

Review of final order or determination, §26-2-376.

Emergencies.

Choking persons.

Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid, §26-2-374.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-375.

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

—Cont'd

Good Samaritan law.

Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid, §26-2-374.

Hair nets or hats.

Use by food preparers, §26-2-373.1.

Inspections, §26-2-375.

Mobile food service establishments.

Inspections in outside counties, §26-2-379.

Meat.

Imported beef.

Display of information, §26-2-155.

Inspection, §26-2-107.

Meat products containing extenders.

Displayed on menus or placards, §26-2-378.

Mobile food service establishments.

Recognition of permit outside county of origin, §§26-2-371, 26-2-379.

Return to base of operation, frequency, §26-2-379.

Revocation of authorization to operate, §26-2-379.

Notices.

Choking persons, §26-2-374.

Permits.

Suspension, revocation or denial, §26-2-372.

Penalties.

Hair nets or hats.

Civil penalties for failure of food preparers to use, §26-2-373.1.

Permits.

Hearings, §26-2-372.

Issuance, §§26-2-371, 26-2-372.

Mobile food service establishments.

Recognition of permit outside county of origin, §§26-2-371, 26-2-379.

Notices.

Suspension, revocation or denial, §26-2-372.

Required, §26-2-371.

Rules and regulations.

Municipalities, §26-2-371.

Suspension, revocation or denial, §26-2-372.

Transferability, §26-2-371.

Validity, §26-2-371.

Rules and regulations.

County boards of health.

Promulgation by boards, §26-2-373.

Department of public health.

Mobile food service establishments, §26-2-379.

INDEX

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

—Cont'd

Rules and regulations —Cont'd

Department of public health —Cont'd

Promulgation by department,
§26-2-373.

Permits.

Municipal rules and regulations,
§26-2-371.

Schools and education.

Nonprofit schools.

Exemption, §26-2-373.

Textured vegetable protein.

Meat products containing extenders.

Displayed on menus or placards,
§26-2-378.

Violation of provisions.

Misdemeanor, §26-2-377.

FOOD TRUCKS.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

FOREST FIRES.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to
25-14-11.

Wildfires.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to
25-14-11.

FORFEITURES.

Cigarette fire safety.

Sales in violation of provisions,
§25-14-6.

FRAUD AND DECEIT.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

License or permit revocation or
suspension, §25-12-17.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

License or certificate based on fraud,
misrepresentation, etc.

Discipline, §25-11-17.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Dissemination of information for
protection against consumer
fraud, §26-2-39.

Meat, §26-2-114.

Meat inspection, §26-2-114.

Penalties, §26-2-88.

FROZEN DESSERTS, §§26-2-239,
26-2-240.

Milk and milk products generally,
§§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

FRUIT JUICES.

Soft drinks.

General provisions, §§26-2-350 to
26-2-357.

G

GALLSTONES.

Advertisement of drug, device or cosmetic.

When advertisement deemed false,
§26-3-13.

GAS.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

GASEOUS.

Explosives.

Defined as resultant gaseous pressures
producing destructive effects,
§25-2-17.

GASOLINE.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer
fireworks, §25-10-2.

GAS-PRODUCING LEASES.

Boiler and pressure vessel safety act.

Inapplicability of act, §25-15-16.

GENERIC DRUGS.

Substitution for name brand,
§26-4-81.

GEORGIA BLASTING STANDARDS ACT.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.

Short title, §25-8-1.

GEORGIA BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.

Safety fire commissioner.

Cooperation with commissioner,
§25-2-34.

GEORGIA DAIRY ACT OF 1980.

General provisions, §§26-2-230 to
26-2-250.

Short title, §26-2-230.

GEORGIA DRUG AND COSMETIC ACT.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to
26-3-24.

Short title, §26-3-1.

INDEX

GEORGIA DRUGS AND NARCOTICS AGENCY, §26-4-29.

Inspections and investigations on behalf of state board of pharmacy, §26-4-28.

GEORGIA FIRE ACADEMY ACT.

General provisions, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Short title, §25-7-1.

GEORGIA FIREFIGHTER STANDARDS AND TRAINING ACT.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Short title, §25-4-1.

GEORGIA FIREFIGHTER STANDARDS AND TRAINING COUNCIL, §§25-4-3 to 25-4-7.1.

GEORGIA FIRE SAFETY STANDARD AND FIREFIGHTER PROTECTION ACT.

Cigarette fire safety generally, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Short title, §25-14-1.

GEORGIA FIRE SPRINKLER ACT.

General provisions, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Short title, §25-11-1.

GEORGIA FOOD ACT.

General provisions.
Adulteration and misbranding,
§§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

Short title, §26-2-20.

GEORGIA MEAT INSPECTION ACT.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Short title, §26-2-60.

GEORGIA UNDERGROUND FACILITY PROTECTION ACT.

General provisions, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Short title, §25-9-1.

GLUCAGON.

Schools.
Health practitioners authorized to prescribe ready-to-use glucagon for schools, §26-4-116.4.

GOATS.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

GOOD FAITH.

Choking persons.

Food service establishments.
Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid,
§26-2-374.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Reliance upon false guarantee or undertaking, §26-3-3.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations.
Collective bargaining.
Obligation of corporate authority and agent, §25-5-6.

Food adulteration and misbranding.

Meat inspection, §26-2-88.
Prohibited acts, §§26-2-22, 26-2-24.

Food service establishments.

Choking persons.
Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid,
§26-2-374.

Meat inspection, §26-2-88.

GOOD SAMARITANS.

Food service establishments.

Relief from civil liability of persons rendering emergency aid,
§26-2-374.

GOOSE EGG.

Defined as shell egg of goose,
§26-2-260.

GRACE PERIODS.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Inspections.
Certificate of inspection, §25-15-23.

GRAIN.

Bread and flour generally, §§26-2-290 to 26-2-297.

GRANDSTANDS.

Landmark museum buildings.

Fire safety standards, §25-2-13.

GRANTS.

Fire academy.

Acceptance, §25-7-6.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Acceptance of grants for administration of chapter,
§25-11-15.

GRAPHIC MATTER.

Label and labeling defined.

Drug and cosmetic act, §26-3-2.
Georgia food act, §26-2-21.

INDEX

GRAPHIC MATTER —Cont'd
Label and labeling defined —Cont'd
Meat inspection act, §26-2-62.

GRITS.

Degerminated hominy grits.
Defined, §26-2-290.
Vitamins and ingredients, §26-2-293.

Duties of commissioner of agriculture, §26-2-295.

Enrichment defined, §26-2-290.

Exceptions to scope of article, §26-2-294.

Labeling requirements, §26-2-295.

GROCERY STORES.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.
Food sales establishment defined, §26-2-21.

GUNSHOT.

Slaughtering livestock.
Approved methods, §26-2-110.1.

H

HAIR NETS.

Food service establishments.
Use by food preparers, §26-2-373.1.

HANDWASHING.

Nonprofit food sales and food service, §26-2-392.

HATS.

Food service establishments.
Use by food preparers, §26-2-373.1.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE.

Fire regulation, §25-2-16.

Utility facility protection.

Emergency 9-1-1 calls.
Strike of or damage to facilities carrying gas or hazardous liquid.
Excavator's duties, §25-9-3.

HEALTH.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
General provisions, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §§26-5-40 to 26-5-62.

HEALTH —Cont'd

State health officer.

Standing order prescribing opioid antagonist.
Immunity of state health officer, §26-4-116.2.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.
Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

Prescription drugs.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Collaboration by medical staff on drug therapy management, §26-4-213.

Composite medical board rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

Definitions, §26-4-212.

Legislative intent, §26-4-211.

Short title, §26-4-210.

State board of pharmacy rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

HEARINGS.

Boiler and pressure vessel inspectors.

Suspension and revocation of certificates of competency, §25-15-21.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Denial, suspension or revocation of licenses, §26-5-15.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations.
Mediation.
Board, §25-5-9.

Fires.

Safety fire commissioner.
Conduct of hearings, §25-2-29.

Food service establishments.

Permits.
Suspension, revocation or denial, §26-2-372.

Soft drinks.

Suspension or revocation of license, §26-2-354.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §§26-5-14 to 26-5-16.

INDEX

HEIMLICH MANEUVER, §26-2-374.

HELIPADS.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

HERBICIDES.

Meat.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE).

Firefighters.

Qualifications, §25-4-8.

HIGHWAYS, ROADS AND STREETS.

Blasting in proximity to, §25-8-3.

Department of transportation.

Utility facility protection.

Cooperation between department and utilities protection center, §25-9-10.1.

Fireworks, use within right of way prohibited, §25-10-2.

Utility facilities.

Protection of utility facilities.

Enforcement.

Inapplicability to work performed within curb lines or pavement edges of public roads, §25-9-14.

Scope of applicability, §25-9-14.

Utility facility protection.

Effect of provisions on rights of way of public roads, streets, etc, §25-9-11.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

Fire safety standards.

Landmark museum buildings.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

HOGS.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

HOLD-OPEN LATCHES, §25-2-16.

HONEY.

Food.

Labels.

Honey and imitation honey labels, §26-2-32.

When food deemed misbranded, §26-2-28.

HORMONES.

Beef production, §26-2-30.1.

HORSES.

Meat.

Labeling and preparation of carcasses, etc., of equines, §26-2-111.

Processing plants.

Horse slaughter operations.

Exceptions, §26-2-214.

Sale of horse meat, §26-2-157.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Slaughter for human consumption or other purposes, §26-2-156.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

Horse slaughter operations.

Exceptions, §26-2-214.

HOSPICE CARE.

Prescription drugs.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Remote automated medication system.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.

Not considered vending machines, §26-4-89.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

HOSPITALS.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.

Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

Pharmacies.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Wholesale drug distributors.

Transfer of drugs from hospital pharmacy to affiliated entity, exception, §26-4-115.

Prescription drugs.

Remote order entry, §26-4-80.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

INDEX

HOSPITALS —Cont'd

Wholesale drug distributors.

Transfer of drugs from hospital pharmacy to affiliated entity, exception, §26-4-115.

HOTELS AND OTHER LODGING PLACES.

Fire hazards.

Regulation, §25-2-19.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Smoke detectors required, §25-2-40.

HOT WATER HEATERS.

General provisions, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

HOUSING.

Blasting in proximity to, §25-8-3.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

Smoke detectors.

Required in new dwellings and dwelling units, §25-2-40.

HYPERGLYCEMIA.

Schools and education.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe ready-to-use glucagon for schools, §26-4-116.4.

HYPOGLYCEMIA.

Schools and education.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe ready-to-use glucagon for schools, §26-4-116.4.

I

ICE CREAM, §§26-2-239, 26-2-240.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS.

Blasting, §25-8-7.

Third-party prescription programs.

Use of card after cancellation of program.

Enrollee's liability, §26-4-147.

IGNITION PROPENSITY FOR CIGARETTES.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

IMMUNITY.

Amusement Ride Safety Act.

State not liable under act, §25-15-68.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act.

State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Carnival Ride Safety Act.

State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Drug overdoses.

Immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.

Fire departments.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §25-6-5.

Fires.

State political subdivisions, etc., §25-2-36.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Background checks, §26-5-61.

Overdoses.

Immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Investigations to enforce license requirements.

Immunity of persons reporting or investigating acts or omissions of licensee or applicant, §26-4-60.

Substance abuse.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Background checks, §26-5-61.

IMPERSONATION.

Fire authorities, §§25-12-17, 25-12-19.

IMPORTS.

Milk and milk products.

Standards and conditions, §26-2-244.

IMPOUNDMENT.

Milk and milk products.

Raw dairy act.

Impoundment of raw milk containing pesticides, herbicides, or other poisonous substances, §26-2-455.

INCENDIARY POSSESSION.

Fires, §§25-2-12, 25-2-32, 25-2-33.

INDEMNIFICATION.

Utility facility protection.

Violations of provisions, §25-9-14.

INFLAMMABLES.

Property inspections, §25-2-23.

INDEX

INHALERS.

Schools.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe certain asthma medication for schools, §26-4-116.3.

INHUMANE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS.

Horses, §26-2-102.

INJUNCTIONS.

Amusement rides.

Operating ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Civil penalties for violations, §25-15-31.

Carnival ride safety.

Operation after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-96.

Cigarette fire safety.

Enforcement of violations, §25-14-6.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-18.

Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Violation of provisions, §26-3-20.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature.

Violations of provisions, §25-13-7.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Enforcement of provisions, §25-12-18.

Fires.

Violations of chapter and rules, §25-2-36.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Enforcement of chapter, §25-11-16.

Fireworks.

Authority of safety fire commissioner, §25-10-11.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Violations, §26-2-23.

Meat contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-185.

Meat inspections.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-86.

Milk and milk products.

Enforcement of article, §26-2-248.

Raw dairy act, §26-2-464.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-57.

INJUNCTIONS —Cont'd

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

State board of pharmacy, powers, §26-4-28.

Violations of pharmacy law, §26-4-117.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §26-2-213.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Violation of provisions, §26-5-18.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §26-5-57.

INNS.

Fire hazards, §25-2-19.

INSECTICIDES.

Meat.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

INSPECTIONS.

Charities.

Food.

Donated food, §26-1-1.

Cigarette fire safety.

Inspection of cigarettes by commissioner of revenue, §25-14-7.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-13.

Onsite inspection of narcotic treatment programs, §26-5-22.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Factories, warehouses, vehicles, etc., §26-3-17.

Drugs and narcotics agency, §26-4-29.

Inspections and investigations on behalf of state board of pharmacy, §26-4-28.

Eggs.

Inspectors, §§26-2-266, 26-2-267.

Fires.

Buildings and premises.

Right to enter and inspect, §25-2-22.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

INDEX

INSPECTIONS —Cont'd

Fires —Cont'd

- Unsafe conditions.
 - Correction, §§25-2-23 to 25-2-26.
 - City or county upon failure to comply with order.
 - Expenses, §25-2-25.
 - Enforcement of provisions, §25-2-26.
 - Issuance of notice, §25-2-23.
 - Petition for court order compelling compliance, §25-2-24.
- Warrants, §25-2-22.1.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

- Defined, §25-11-2.
- Individuals authorized to inspect and maintain systems, §25-11-11.

Fireworks.

- Manufacture, storage and transportation.
- Inspection of facilities, §25-10-5.

Fish, §26-2-318.

- Fees, §26-2-312.
- Imports, §26-2-312.

Food.

- Adulteration and misbranding.
 - Right of entry of commissioner, §26-2-36.
- Meat inspection.
 - General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Food service establishments, §26-2-375.

- Mobile food service establishments.
- Inspections in outside counties, §26-2-379.

Food sold from mobile vehicles.

- Licensing and inspection of vehicle, §26-2-411.

Meat inspection.

- General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Milk and milk products.

- Processors, manufacturers, etc., §26-2-243.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

- Inspection of premises, §26-5-52.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Pharmacy contracting with emergency service provider, §26-4-116.

Scaffolding design.

- Commissioner of labor, §25-15-110.

Soft drinks.

- Sanitary inspection of buildings, area, vehicle, etc., §26-2-355.

INSPECTIONS —Cont'd

Staging design.

- Commissioner of labor, §25-15-110.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-13.
- Onsite inspection of narcotic treatment programs, §26-5-22.
- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
- Inspection of premises, §26-5-52.

INSULIN.

Schools and education.

- Health practitioners authorized to prescribe ready-to-use glucagon for schools, §26-4-116.4.

INSURANCE.

Amusement rides.

- Owners or operators, §25-15-62.

Arson.

- Payment of claims.
- Notice, §25-2-33.1.

Carnival ride safety.

- Operators, §25-15-92.

Commissioner of insurance.

- Pharmacists and pharmacies.
 - Third-party prescription programs.
 - General provisions, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Prescriptions.

- Third-party prescription programs.
- General provisions, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Safety fire commissioner.

- Designation, §25-2-2.

Safety fire division.

- Head of division.

- State fire marshal, §25-2-6.

Fire departments.

- Minimum requirements, §25-3-23.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

- Requirements, §25-11-4.

Fireworks.

- Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.

Rates and rating organizations.

- Smoke detectors.
- Failure to maintain, §25-2-40.

INSURANCE COMPANIES.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Third-party prescription programs.
- General provisions, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

INDEX

INSURANCE COMPANIES —Cont'd **Prescriptions.**

Third-party prescription programs.
General provisions, §§26-4-140 to
26-4-148.

INTERNET.

Prescription drug orders.

Electronic transmission, §26-4-80.

INTERNS.

Pharmacists, §26-4-5.

INTERPRETATION AND CONSTRUCTION.

Amusement ride safety.

Applicability of chapter, §25-15-64.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act.

Applicability of section, §25-15-10.
Exceptions from section, §25-15-16.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Construction of chapter, §26-3-21.

Fire departments.

Minimum requirements.
Construction of article, §25-3-27.
Powers and duties of other officials
and departments, §25-3-6.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations.
Applicability of chapter, §25-5-14.

Fires.

Construction of chapter, §25-2-39.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Liberal construction of chapter,
§26-4-2.

INTERSTATE COMMERCE.

Fireworks.

Transporting consumer fireworks,
restrictions, §25-10-2.

INTESTINAL CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

INVESTIGATIONS.

Arson.

Arrest of suspect, §25-2-27.
District attorney.
Furnishing of information to,
§25-2-27.
Local governing authorities, §25-2-12.
Procedure.
Taking of testimony, §25-2-27.
Subpoenas, §25-2-28.

INVESTIGATIONS —Cont'd

Fires.

Burn injuries.
Serious burn injuries reported to
safety fire division, §25-2-32.2.
State fire marshal and employees.
Authority to investigate cause and
origin, §25-2-9.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Enforcement of licensee requirements,
§26-4-60.
Executive director investigative
interviews, §26-4-28.
State board of pharmacy inspections
and investigations, §26-4-28.

J

JAILS.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer
fireworks, §25-10-2.

JUDGMENTS.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.
Summaries of judgments, decrees
and orders rendered, §26-2-39.

JUNGLE GYMS.

Amusement ride safety.

Exceptions to provisions, §25-15-64.

Carnival ride safety.

Exceptions to provisions, §25-15-94.

JURISDICTION.

Meat inspection.

Concurrent enforcement jurisdiction
with United States secretary of
agriculture, §26-2-64.

K

KICKBACKS.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

Pharmacy audit bill of rights.

Payment of person conducting audit
based on percentage of amount
recovered, prohibited, §26-4-118.

INDEX

KIDNEY DISEASES.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.
Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

L

LABELS.

Bread and flour.

Requirements, §26-2-295.

Cigarette fire safety.

Marking of cigarettes to indicate
compliance, §25-14-5.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Advertising or labeling drug as
antiseptic, §26-3-15.

Misleading labels.

Factors taken into account in
determination, §26-3-14.

Name and address of manufacturer on
label of drugs requiring
prescription, §26-3-9.

Eggs.

Containers, §26-2-261.

Information labels affixed to cases of
eggs, §26-2-268.

Reciprocal marketing agreements to
vary labeling requirements,
§26-2-270.

Meat.

Adulterated meat and meat food
products, §26-2-108.

Custom slaughtered and prepared
meat or meat food products,
§26-2-112.

Dog meat, §26-2-160.

Horse meat, §§26-2-111, 26-2-157.

Meat, meat food products and
carcasses, §26-2-107.

Use of false or misleading labels or
containers, §26-2-107.

Milk and milk products.

Raw dairy act.

Labeling of bottles, packages and
containers for raw milk,
§26-2-456.

Prescriptions.

Label requirements when generic drug
substituted for brand name,
§26-4-81.

Spring water, §26-2-4.

LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS.

Department of labor.

Safety fire commissioner.

Office as successor to department of
labor, §25-15-1.

LABORATORIES.

Cigarette fire safety.

Laboratories conducting testing.

Quality control and quality
assurance program, §25-14-3.

LABOR UNIONS.

Strikes.

Firefighters, §25-5-12.

LANDMARK MUSEUM BUILDINGS.

Fire safety standards, §25-2-13.

LANTERNS.

**Use of certain devices using fire for
propulsion, prohibitions,**
§25-10-10.

LARD.

Standards, §26-2-1.

LAUNDRIES, CLEANERS, TAILORS AND COBBLERS.

Fire protection and safety.

Special hazards to persons or property
generally.

Regulation of storage,
transportation, etc., of
substances presenting special
hazards, §25-2-16.

Special hazards to persons or property generally.

Regulation of storage, transportation,
etc., of substances presenting
special hazards, §25-2-16.

LEMONADE.

Soft drinks.

General provisions, §§26-2-350 to
26-2-357.

LEUKEMIA.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

LIABILITY.

Carnival ride safety.

State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Fire protection and safety.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Failure to respond for purposes of
extinguishing fires, §25-6-5.

INDEX

LIABILITY —Cont'd

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Third-party prescription programs.
- Use of program identification card for canceled program, §26-4-147.

LIABILITY INSURANCE.

Fireworks.

- Distributors of consumer fireworks.
- License requirements, §25-10-5.1.
- Failure to comply with requirements.
- License revocation or suspension, §25-10-12.

LICENSES.

Amusement ride inspectors.

- Private inspectors, §25-15-54.

Blasting, §25-8-6.

- Refusal, suspension or revocation of license, §25-8-7.

Carnivals, circuses, road shows or other itinerant shows.

- Carnival ride safety inspectors, §25-15-84.
- Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Circuses.

- Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Durable medical equipment.

- Supplier license requirements, §26-4-51.

Eggs.

- Candlers and graders, §26-2-272.
- Egg handlers and wholesalers, §26-2-263.
- Exemption of producers from licensing, §26-2-264.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

- Applications, §25-11-5.
- Fees.
 - Fire protection system designer license, §25-11-7.
 - Fire protection system inspector license, §25-11-6.
 - Sprinkler contractor license, §25-11-5.
- Fire protection system designer license, §25-11-7.
- Defined, §25-11-2.
- Preparation of water-based fire protection system documents for construction by designers.
- Licensed fire protection system designers only, §25-11-10.

LICENSES —Cont'd

Fire sprinkler contractors —Cont'd

- Fire protection system inspector license, §25-11-6.
- Definition of fire protection system inspector's license, §25-11-2.
- Locations.
 - Licensing of each location, §25-11-5.
- Nonrenewal to discipline licensee, §25-11-17.
- Renewal.
 - Failure to renew, §25-11-18.
- Requirement of license.
 - Discipline for unlicensed work, §25-11-17.
- Revocation, §§25-11-16, 25-11-17.
- Suspension, §25-11-17.
- Underground facilities or piping connections.
- Installation or repair, §25-11-13.

Fireworks.

- Distributors of consumer fireworks, §25-10-5.1.
- Manufacture, storage and transportation, §25-10-5.
- Pyrotechnics exhibits, §25-10-3.2.
- Expiration, §25-10-5.
- Fees, §25-10-5.
- Revocation, suspension or nonrenewal.
 - Cease and desist order violation, §25-10-11.
 - Failure to comply with requirements, §25-10-12.

Fish.

- Wholesale fish dealers, §§26-2-312 to 26-2-314.

Food sales establishments, §26-2-25.

Food sold from mobile vehicles.

- Licensing of vehicle, §26-2-411.

Milk and milk products.

- General provisions, §§26-2-234, 26-2-235.

Motion pictures.

- Traveling motion picture shows.
- Fire prevention regulatory license, §25-2-20.

Pharmacies, §§26-4-110, 26-4-111.

Pharmacists.

- Practice of pharmacy, §§26-4-40 to 26-4-50.

Processing plants.

- Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-209, 26-2-210.

Soft drinks.

- Manufacture and bottling, §26-2-351.

INDEX

LICENSES —Cont'd

Soft drinks —Cont'd

Separate license for each business or bottling or manufacturing plant, §26-2-351.

Suspension or revocation, §26-2-354.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS.

Cigarette fire safety.

False certifications, §25-14-6.

LISTERIA.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards, §26-2-458.

LIVESTOCK.

Abattoirs.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Slaughterhouses.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

LOBSTERS.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Limitations on authority to regulate, §25-15-29.

Fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to 25-3-27.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

LOCAL LAWS.

Utility facility protection.

Preemption of ordinances imposing fines or additional marking/locating requirements, §25-9-11.1.

LODGING PLACES.

Fire hazards, §25-2-19.

LUNCH ROOMS AND LUNCHEONETTES.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

LUNG CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

LYMPHATIC CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

M

MAIL.

Prescriptions.

Use to dispense, §26-4-60.

MALLS.

Fire and other hazards.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-13.

MANDAMUS.

Amusement rides.

Operation of ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Carnival ride safety.

Operation after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-96.

MARIJUANA.

Misbranding of drugs or devices, §26-3-8.

MARKS AND BRANDS.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

General provisions, §§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

MEAT.

Adulteration.

Labeling of adulterated meat and meat food products, §26-2-108.

Advertising.

Deceptive advertising.

Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-151.

Disclosure of price per pound, §26-2-152.

Legislative intent, §26-2-150.

Plant-based meat, §26-2-152.

Use of "Georgia" in advertisements, §26-2-115.

INDEX

MEAT —Cont'd

Advertising —Cont'd

Violations of provisions, §26-2-154.

Carcasses.

Buying, selling or transporting of dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals, §26-2-130.

Condemned carcasses.

Disposition, §26-2-103.

Labeling, §26-2-107.

Limitation on entry of carcasses, §26-2-104.

Meat processors and related industries.

Identification of carcasses not intended for human use, §26-2-133.

Postmortem inspection and markings, §26-2-103.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

Definitions, §26-2-180.

Destruction, §26-2-184.

Federal tolerances.

Compliance, §26-2-184.

Injunctions, §26-2-185.

Inspection, §26-2-182.

Notice.

Owners or keepers, §26-2-182.

Quarantine, §26-2-182.

Removal from quarantine on order of commissioner, §26-2-183.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation, §26-2-181.

Sampling, §26-2-183.

Violations of provisions.

Misdemeanor, §26-2-186.

Dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals.

Buying, selling, transportation, etc., §26-2-130.

Registration of dealers, §26-2-131.

Dealers.

Dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals.

Registration of dealers, §26-2-131.

Dog meat.

Labels, §26-2-160.

Sale for human consumption, §26-2-160.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Examination.

Manner of examinations, §26-2-101.

Food service establishments.

Imported beef.

Display of information, §26-2-155.

MEAT —Cont'd

Food service establishments —Cont'd

Inspection, §26-2-107.

Meat products containing extenders.

Displayed on menus or placards, §26-2-378.

Fraud, §26-2-114.

“Georgia lean” beef.

Standards for labeling and certification, §26-2-30.1.

Horses.

Labeling and preparation of carcasses, etc., of equines, §26-2-111.

Processing plants.

Horse slaughter operations.

Exceptions, §26-2-214.

Sale of horse meat, §26-2-157.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Slaughter for human consumption or other purposes, §26-2-156.

Imported beef.

Food service establishment display of information, §26-2-155.

Injunctions.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-185.

Inspection, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Labels.

Custom slaughtered and prepared meat or meat food products, §26-2-112.

Dog meat, §26-2-160.

“Georgia lean” beef.

Establishment of standards, §26-2-30.1.

Horse meat, §§26-2-111, 26-2-157.

Meat processors and related industries, §§26-2-130 to 26-2-133.

Carcasses, meat or meat food products.

Identification for products not intended for human use, §26-2-133.

Dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals.

Buying, selling, transportation, etc., §26-2-130.

Registration of dealers, §26-2-131.

Noninspected meat, §26-2-106.

Records.

Inspections, §26-2-132.

Maintenance, §26-2-132.

Mobile sales, §§26-2-410 to 26-2-413.

INDEX

MEAT —Cont'd

Packing establishments.

- Inspections, §26-2-108.
- Federally inspected establishments, §26-2-116.

Plant-based meat.

- Advertising requirements, §26-2-152.

Processing plants.

- Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Records.

- Meat processors and related industries.
- Maintenance and inspection of records, §26-2-132.

Registration.

- Meat processors and related industries.
- Dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals.
- Dealers, §26-2-131.

Retail establishments.

- Inspection of meat and meat food products, §26-2-106.

Rules and regulations.

- Contaminated meat.
- Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-181.
- Deceptive advertising of meat.
- Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-151.
- Horse meat.
- Sale of horse meat.
- Promulgation of regulations, §26-2-159.
- Storage and handling of carcasses, meat and meat food products, §26-2-113.

Sales.

- Disclosure of price per pound, §26-2-152.
- Dog meat.
- Label on packages, §26-2-160.
- Sale for human consumption, §26-2-160.
- Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.
- Horse meat.
- Label, §26-2-157.
- Regulations.
- Promulgation, §26-2-159.
- Seller to inform purchaser, §26-2-158.
- Signs, §26-2-157.
- Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.
- Legislative intent, §26-2-150.

MEAT —Cont'd

Sales —Cont'd

- Meat processors and related industries.
- Selling dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals, §26-2-130.
- Net weight, §26-2-2.
- Noninspected meat, §26-2-106.
- Partial or whole carcasses, §26-2-153.
- Violations of provisions, §26-2-154.

Samples.

- Contamination.
- Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §26-2-183.

Sanitation.

- Regulations, §26-2-108.

Slaughtering.

- Commissioner.
- Designation of methods of handling and slaughtering, §26-2-110.1.
- Custom slaughtered and prepared meat or meat food products.
- Labeling and handling, §26-2-112.
- Requirements generally, §26-2-110.

Storage.

- Regulation for storage of carcasses, meat and meat food products, §26-2-113.

Trademarks.

- Use of "Georgia" trademark, §26-2-115.

Weight.

- Net weight.
- Sale by, §26-2-2.

MEAT-CANNING.

Inspection of meat food products generally, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

MEAT INSPECTION, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Administration of article, §26-2-101.

Adulteration.

- Detention of carcasses, meat, etc., suspected of being adulterated or misbranded, §26-2-84.
- Distribution of adulterated articles.
- Penalties, §26-2-88.
- Labeling, §26-2-108.

Attorney general.

- Failure to file inspection reports.
- Prosecution for recovery of forfeitures, §26-2-81.

Bonds, surety.

- Release bond, §26-2-85.

Carcasses.

- Brought into or returned to slaughtering or packing establishments, §26-2-104.

INDEX

MEAT INSPECTION —Cont'd

Carcasses —Cont'd

Condemned carcasses and parts.

Disposition, §26-2-103.

Detention of carcasses suspected of
being adulterated or misbranded,
§26-2-84.

Limitation on entry into
establishments, §26-2-104.

Seizure and condemnation, §26-2-85.

Citation of article, §26-2-60.

Commissioner.

Access to documentary evidence and
witnesses, §26-2-81.

Powers, §26-2-81.

Rules and regulations.

Promulgation, §26-2-80.

Concurrent enforcement

jurisdiction with United States
secretary of agriculture, §26-2-64.

Condemned meat and carcasses.

Disposition, §§26-2-103, 26-2-106.

Seizure, §26-2-85.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue
causing, §26-2-182.

Definitions, §26-2-62.

Denial of inspection.

Slaughter of animals by unapproved
methods, §26-2-102.

Detention of carcasses, meat, etc., suspected of being adulterated or misbranded, §26-2-84.

Diseased animals.

Examination and slaughtering
diseased animals, §26-2-102.

Enforcement of provisions.

Concurrent jurisdiction with United
States secretary of agriculture,
§26-2-64.

Evidence.

Access of commissioner to
documentary evidence, §26-2-81.

Exceptions, §26-2-112.

Federal and state cooperation, §26-2-63.

Federally inspected slaughtering and packing establishments.

Applicability of part, §26-2-116.

Food service establishments, §26-2-106.

Fraud, §26-2-114.

Penalties, §26-2-88.

Injunctions.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-86.

MEAT INSPECTION —Cont'd

Inspectors.

Department, §26-2-100.

Duties, §26-2-100.

Removal, §26-2-103.

Intent of legislature, §26-2-61.

Labels.

Adulterated meat and meat food
products, §26-2-108.

Meat, meat food products and
carcasses, §26-2-107.

Use of false or misleading labels or
containers, §26-2-107.

Legislative intent, §26-2-61.

Manner of inspection, §26-2-101.

Markings, §26-2-105.

Meat processors and related industries, §§26-2-130 to 26-2-133.

Minor violations, §26-2-87.

Nighttime slaughtering of animals and preparation of food products.

Timing of inspection and examination,
§26-2-109.

Nontraditional livestock.

Defined, §26-2-62.

Voluntary inspection program,
§26-2-100.1.

Official marks.

Defined, §26-2-62.

Removal, §26-2-84.

Packing establishments, §26-2-108.

Federally inspected establishments,
§26-2-116.

Penalties.

Administrative penalties, §26-2-82.

Judicial review, §26-2-82.

Distribution of adulterated articles,
§26-2-88.

Fraud, §26-2-88.

Postmortem inspection and marking of carcasses, §26-2-103.

Prior to slaughter or preparation, §26-2-102.

Refusal to provide service.

Authority of commissioner, §26-2-83.

Reinspections, §26-2-103.

Reports.

Failure to file, §26-2-81.

False reports, §26-2-81.

Retail establishments, §26-2-106.

Right of entry, §26-2-105.

Rules and regulations.

Commissioner.

Promulgation, §26-2-80.

INDEX

MEAT INSPECTION —Cont'd

Rules and regulations —Cont'd

Compliance with, §26-2-101.

Sale or display of noninspected meat, §26-2-106.

Searches and seizures.

Seizure and condemnation of carcasses, meat, etc., §26-2-85.

Short title of article, §26-2-60.

Slaughtering.

Approved methods for handling and slaughtering animals, §26-2-110.1.

Inspection of method of slaughter, §26-2-102.

Requirements generally, §26-2-110.

Slaughter and packing establishments, §26-2-108.

State and federal cooperation, §26-2-63.

Suspension.

Slaughtering animals by unapproved methods, §26-2-102.

Timing of inspection or examination of slaughtered and prepared animals, §26-2-109.

Violations of provisions.

Injunctions, §26-2-86.

Minor violations, §26-2-87.

Voluntary inspection program for nontraditional livestock and meat products, §26-2-100.1.

Withdrawal of service, §26-2-83.

Witnesses.

Access of commissioner, §26-2-81.

MEAT INSPECTION ACT.

Georgia meat inspection act.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

Short title, §26-2-60.

MEAT PACKING

ESTABLISHMENTS.

Meat inspection.

Federally inspected establishments, §26-2-116.

Generally, §26-2-104.

Sanitary inspections, §26-2-108.

MEDIATION.

Firefighters.

Labor and employment relations, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

MEDICARE.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.

Out-of-state manufacturer or wholesale distributor enrolled in Medicare, §26-4-51.

MEDICINE.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-1 to 26-4-179.

MENTAL EXAMINATIONS.

Pharmacy technicians, §26-4-28.

MENTAL HEALTH.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

General provisions, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §§26-5-40 to 26-5-62.

MENU.

Eggs.

Placards.

Placing of information on menu in lieu of, §26-2-269.

Meat products that contain extenders.

Information to appear on menu or other advertisement, §26-2-378.

MERRY-GO-ROUNDS.

Amusement ride safety.

Exceptions to provisions, §25-15-64.

Carnival ride safety.

Exemptions from provisions, §25-15-94.

MESCALINE.

Jug misbranding, §26-3-8.

MILITARY AFFAIRS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Service members.

Defined, §26-4-44.2.

Licenses.

Exceptions for active duty service members, §26-4-44.2.

Temporary license, §26-4-43.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

Adulteration.

Ice cream, §26-2-240.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

—Cont'd

Adulteration —Cont'd

- Raw dairy act.
- Examination of raw milk for adulteration or misbranding, §26-2-455.

Babcock tests, §26-2-241.

Citation of article, §26-2-230.

Coloring.

- Products produced, delivered, etc., in violation of state laws, §26-2-245.

Commissioner.

- Duties, §26-2-232.
- Enforcement powers, §26-2-243.
- Raw dairy act.
- Enforcement duties, §26-2-452.
- Injunction of continued violations, §26-2-464.
- Regulatory authority, §26-2-453.
- Rules and regulations.
- Promulgation, §26-2-233.

Condemnation.

- Products produced, delivered, etc., in violation of laws, §26-2-245.

Condensed or evaporated milk.

- Sales, §26-2-242.

Cream testers.

- Defined, §26-2-231.
- Licenses, §26-2-235.

Definitions, §26-2-231.

Enforcement of article.

- Generally, §§26-2-232, 26-2-247.
- Injunctions, §26-2-248.
- Raw dairy act, §26-2-452.

Frozen desserts.

- Adulterated ice cream, §26-2-240.
- Standards and requirements generally, §26-2-239.

Grade A milk.

- Intermingling with other grades, §26-2-243.

Ice cream.

- Adulterated ice cream, §26-2-240.
- Standards and requirements generally, §26-2-239.

Importation.

- Standards and conditions, §26-2-244.

Injunctions.

- Enforcement of article, §26-2-248.
- Raw dairy act, §26-2-464.

Inspections.

- Processors, manufacturers, etc., §26-2-243.

Licenses.

- Applications, §26-2-234.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

—Cont'd

Licenses —Cont'd

- Cream testers, §26-2-235.
- Denial, suspension or revocation.
- Procedure, §26-2-234.
- Duration, §26-2-234.
- Renewal, §26-2-234.

Manufacturers.

- Inspections, §26-2-243.

Milk and cream brokers.

- Defined, §26-2-231.

Milk or cream buying stations.

- Defined, §26-2-231.

Permits.

- Processors, manufacturers, etc., §26-2-243.
- Raw dairy act, §26-2-454.
- Drug residues found in milk, suspension of permit, §26-2-455.
- Revocation or cancellation of permit, §26-2-462.
- Revocation or cancellation.
- Authority of commissioner, §26-2-247.

Processing plants.

- Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Raw dairy act, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

- Chemical, bacteriological, and temperature standards, §26-2-458.
- Notice of noncompliance, §26-2-457.
- Sampling and testing of raw milk, §26-2-457.

Commissioner of agriculture.

- Enforcement duties, §26-2-452.
- Injunction of continued violations, §26-2-464.

Regulatory authority, §26-2-453.

- Consumer notice of health hazards, §26-2-461.

Definitions, §26-2-450.

- Direct sale to consumers of raw milk for human consumption, §26-2-451.

- Diseases, testing animals for, §26-2-460.

- Drug residues found in milk, effect, §26-2-455.

Enforcement of provisions, §26-2-452.

- Criminal offense, violation as, §26-2-466.

- Injunction of continued violations, §26-2-464.

- Unlawful activities, §26-2-465.

INDEX

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

—Cont'd

Raw dairy act —Cont'd

- Examination of raw milk for adulteration or misbranding, §26-2-455.
- Examination of raw milk for public health purposes, §26-2-457.
- Food for lactating animals, restrictions, §26-2-459.
- Freezing point indicating raw milk contains added water, effect, §26-2-455.
- Health of animals, requirements, §26-2-460.
- Hold order on raw milk believed to be misbranded or adulterated, §26-2-455.
- Impoundment of raw milk containing pesticides, herbicides, or other poisonous substances, §26-2-455.
- Labeling of bottles, packages and containers for raw milk, §26-2-456.
- Milking of animals, procedures.
 - Sanitation requirements, §26-2-459.
- Notice of bacterial counts or other determinations not in compliance with standards, §26-2-457.
- Notice to consumers of health hazards, §26-2-461.
- Permit requirements, §26-2-454.
 - Drug residues found in milk, suspension of permit, §26-2-455.
 - Revocation or cancellation of permit, §26-2-462.
- Recall of product.
 - Drug residues, §26-2-455.
 - Public health purposes, §26-2-461.
- Records of operations.
 - Maintenance and examination, §26-2-463.
- Rulemaking to implement provisions, §26-2-453.
- Sampling and testing of raw milk for public health purposes, §26-2-457.
- Sanitation requirements, §26-2-459.
- Testing of animals for diseases, §26-2-460.
- Violations.
 - Criminal offense, violation as, §26-2-466.
 - Injunction of continued violations, §26-2-464.
 - Unlawful activities, §26-2-465.

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

—Cont'd

Raw dairy act —Cont'd

- Wholesale sale of raw milk for human consumption, §26-2-451.

Raw whole milk.

- Sales, §26-2-242.

Records.

- Maintenance, examination, etc., §26-2-246.
- Raw dairy act, §26-2-463.

Sales.

- Condensed or evaporated milk, §26-2-242.
- Raw milk for human consumption, §26-2-451.
- Raw whole milk, §26-2-242.
- Standards and requirements, §26-2-242.
- Ungraded milk, §26-2-242.

Short title of article, §26-2-230.

Soft drinks.

- Plant licensing.
- Applicability to dairy plants, §26-2-356.

Standards.

- Federal standards, §26-2-238.
- Frozen desserts, §26-2-239.
- Generally, §26-2-238.
- Importation, §26-2-244.
- Sales, §26-2-242.

Testing of milk, cream, etc., §26-2-241.

- Raw dairy act.
 - Sampling and testing of raw milk for public health purposes, §26-2-457.

Ungraded milk.

- Defined, §26-2-231.
- Sales, §26-2-242.

Unlawful acts, §26-2-249.

Violations.

- Condemnation and coloring of products delivered in violation of state laws, §26-2-245.
- Enforcement of article generally, §26-2-247.
- Misdemeanor, §26-2-250.
- Unlawful acts, §26-2-249.

MINORS.

Dynamite caps.

- Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Explosives.

- Dynamite caps.
 - Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

INDEX

MINORS —Cont'd

Fires.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on consumer fireworks,
§25-10-2.

Storage or public displays of fireworks.

Employment of persons under age
18 in connection with,
§25-10-4.1.

MISBRANDING.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

General provisions, §§26-2-20 to
26-2-41.

Milk and milk products.

Raw dairy act.

Examination of raw milk for
adulteration or misbranding,
§26-2-455.

MISDEMEANORS.

Amusement ride safety act.

Violations of chapter, §25-15-66.

Carnival ride safety.

Violations of chapter, §25-15-96.

Consumer fireworks.

Operating under the influence of
alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Violations of provisions, §26-5-19.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Drug agents.

Impeding, obstructing, hindering,
etc., §26-3-23.

Violation of chapter, §26-3-24.

Drugs sold in vending machines, §26-4-89.

Dynamite caps.

Minors.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Eggs.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-274.

Fire departments.

Mutual aid resource pacts.

Violations of chapter, §25-6-11.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Violations of chapter, §25-12-19.

License or permit revocation or
suspension, §25-12-18.

Fires.

Violations of provisions, §25-2-38.

MISDEMEANORS —Cont'd

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Violations of chapter, §25-11-16.

Fireworks.

Operating under the influence of
alcohol or drugs, §25-10-2.1.

Violations of chapter, §25-10-8.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-24.

Inspections.

Obstruction of inspectors, §26-2-3.

Food processing plants.

Testing of specimens, failure to report
adulteration, §26-2-27.1.

Food service establishments.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-377.

Food sold from mobile vehicles, §26-2-413.

Meat.

Advertising and sales.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-154.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing
residue causing.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-186.

Meat inspection.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-88.

Milk and milk products.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-250.

Raw dairy act, §26-2-466.

Minors.

Dynamite caps.

Making available to minors, §25-1-1.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Disciplinary violations, §26-4-62.

Poisons.

Violations of part, §26-4-163.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Poisons.

Violations of part, §26-4-163.

Prescriptions.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

Horse slaughter operations,
§26-2-214.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-215.

Raw dairy act.

Violations, §26-2-466.

INDEX

MISDEMEANORS —Cont'd

Scaffolding design.

Violations of section, §25-15-110.

Soft drinks.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-357.

Staging design.

Violations of section, §25-15-110.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering, §26-5-80.

Violation of provisions, §26-5-19.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

MISLABELING.

Misbranding.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding,
§§26-2-20 to 26-2-41.

MISREPRESENTATION.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

License or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-17.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

License or certificate based on fraud, misrepresentation, etc.

Discipline, §25-11-17.

MOBILE FOOD SALES, §§26-2-410 to 26-2-413.

Food service establishments generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

MOONWALKS.

Amusement ride safety.

Exceptions to provisions, §25-15-64.

Carnival ride safety.

Exceptions to provisions, §25-15-94.

MOTION PICTURES.

Fire department nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with productions,
§§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

Licenses.

Traveling motion picture shows.

Fire prevention regulatory license,
§25-2-20.

MOTOR VEHICLES.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Inspection, §26-3-17.

MOTOR VEHICLES —Cont'd

Fireworks.

Sale of consumer fireworks from vehicle, prohibited, §25-10-2.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

Amusement rides.

Local regulation, §25-15-69.

Arson.

Investigations, §25-2-12.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Limitations on authority to regulate,
§25-15-29.

Carnival rides.

Local regulation, §25-15-101.

Fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to 25-3-27.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

Nomenclature, §§25-13-1 to 25-13-10.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Power to regulate not limited,
§25-12-22.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to 25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Fires.

Arson.

Investigations, §25-2-12.

State fire safety standards.

Adoption, §25-2-12.

Enforcement.

Buildings presenting special hazards, §25-2-12.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Applicability of chapter to work performed for, §25-11-14.

Contract and bid requirements,
§25-11-14.

Food service establishments.

Permits.

Rules and regulations by municipalities, §26-2-371.

Labor and employment relations.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

Ordinances, §26-2-212.

INDEX

MUNICIPAL, COUNTY AND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS NOMENCLATURE ACT OF 1996.

General provisions, §§25-13-1 to
25-13-10.

Short title, §25-13-1.

MUSEUMS.

Fire safety standards.

- Landmark museum buildings.
- Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

MUTUAL AID RESOURCE PACTS.

Fire departments, §§25-6-1 to 25-6-11.

N

NARCOTIC DRUGS.

**Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act**, §§26-5-40 to
26-5-62.

NARCOTIC TREATMENT PROGRAMS ENFORCEMENT ACT.

General provisions, §§26-5-40 to
26-5-62.

Short title, §26-5-41.

NATURAL GAS.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

NATURAL RESOURCES.

Department of natural resources.

- Nuclear pharmacy law.
- Authority of department to regulate
use of radioactive materials not
repealed, §26-4-179.

NEGLIGENCE.

Smoke detectors.

- Failure to maintain, §25-2-40.

NIACIN.

Bread.

- Vitamins and ingredients in,
§26-2-292.

Degerminated cornmeal.

- Vitamins and ingredients in,
§26-2-293.

Flour.

- Vitamins and ingredients in,
§26-2-291.

NIGHTCLUBS.

Fire and other hazards.

- Buildings presenting special hazards
to persons or property, §25-2-13.

NOISE.

Fireworks.

- Restrictions on consumer fireworks,
§25-10-2.

NONALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

Bottled soft drinks.

- Defined, §26-2-350.

NONFAMILY ADULTS.

Homes for.

- Fire and other hazards.
- Buildings presenting special
hazards, §25-2-13.

NON-HODGKIN'S LYMPHOMA.

Fire departments.

- Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

NONPRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

Sale, §26-4-30.

NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS.

Food.

- Donation.
- Inspection of donated food, §26-1-1.

NONPROFIT FOOD SALES AND

FOOD SERVICE, §§26-2-390 to
26-2-393.

NONRESIDENTS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Nonresident pharmacy permits,
§26-4-114.1.

NOTICE.

Arson.

- Insurance.
- Payment of claims, §25-2-33.1.

Boiler and pressure vessel inspectors.

- Suspension and revocation of
certificates of competency,
§25-15-21.

Cigarette fire safety.

- Labeling of cigarettes.
- Notification to commissioner of
markings selected, §25-14-5.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Denial, suspension or revocation of
licenses, §26-5-15.

Drug and cosmetic act.

- Violations.
- Notice to possible defendant,
§26-3-5.

INDEX

NOTICE —Cont'd

Fires.

- Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.
- Notice of hearing regarding license or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-18.
- Unsafe conditions.
- Issuance of notice to correct, §25-2-23.

Fireworks.

- Cease and desist orders, notice of opportunity for hearing, §25-10-11.

Food.

- Adulteration and misbranding.
- Defendant notified prior to institution of criminal proceedings, §26-2-41.

Food service establishments.

- Choking persons, §26-2-374.
- Permits.
- Suspension, revocation or denial, §26-2-372.

Meat.

- Contamination.
- Animals suspected of bearing residue causing.
- Owners or keepers, §26-2-182.

Milk and milk products.

- Raw dairy act.
- Notice to consumers of health hazards, §26-2-461.
- Sampling and testing of raw milk for public health purposes.
- Notice of bacterial counts or other determinations not in compliance with standards, §26-2-457.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

- Notice of proposed license suspension or revocation, §26-5-54.

Pharmacists.

- Felony conviction, §26-4-28.2.

Substance abuse.

- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
- Notice of proposed license suspension or revocation, §26-5-54.

Utility facility protection.

- Appropriate notice included with locate request, §25-9-6.
- Definition of appropriate notice, §25-9-3.

NOTICE —Cont'd

Utility facility protection —Cont'd

- Appropriate notice included with locate request —Cont'd
- Emergency excavations.
- Applicability of provisions, §25-9-12.
- Nonemergency excavations in area where owners or operators has declared extraordinary circumstances.
- Applicability of appropriate notice requirement, §25-9-13.

NOTICE OF APPEAL.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

- Orders of commissioner or chief inspector, §25-15-28.

NOZZLES.

Fire suppression systems.

- Definitions.
- Engineered fire suppression system, §25-12-2.
- Preengineered fire suppression system, §25-12-2.

Water-spray system.

- Definition, §25-11-2.

NUCLEAR PHARMACY LAW.

General provisions, §§26-4-170 to 26-4-179.

Short title, §26-4-170.

NUISANCES.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Violations of provisions as nuisance per se, §26-5-18.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
- Violation of provisions, §26-5-18.

NURSING HOMES.

Durable medical equipment.

- Supplier license requirements.
- Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Fire safety standards.

- Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Prescription drugs.

- Remote automated medication system.
- Skilled nursing facilities.
- Defined, §26-4-5.
- Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.
- Not considered vending machines, §26-4-89.

INDEX

NURSING HOMES —Cont'd
Prescription drugs —Cont'd
Safe medications practice act,
§§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.
Safe medications practice act,
§§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.
Smoke detectors.
Where required, §25-2-40.
NUTRITION INFORMATION.
Food service establishments.
Local laws requiring provision of
nutrition information, prohibited,
§26-2-373.

O

OBESITY.
Commonsense consumption act.
Nonliability of food manufacturers,
distributors, sellers, packers, etc.,
§§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.
OBLITERATION.
Cosmetics.
Labeling.
Prohibited acts, §26-3-3.
Fire suppression systems.
Serial numbers.
Obliterating for purposes of
falsifying service records,
§25-12-19.
Food.
Labeling.
Prohibited acts, §26-2-22.
ONE CALL.
Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS.
Prescriptions.
Pharmacy refilling of topical products
without authorization to prevent
unintended interruptions in drug
therapy, §26-4-80.
OPIOID RELATED OVERDOSES.
**Administering opioid antagonists to
save life of person experiencing
overdose.**
Immunity, §26-4-116.2.
Immunity.
Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonists, §26-4-116.2.
ORANGEADE.
Soft drinks.
General provisions, §§26-2-350 to
26-2-357.

ORDERS.
**Fire extinguishers and suppression
systems.**
License or permit revocation or
suspension, §§25-12-17, 25-12-18.
Food.
Adulteration and misbranding of food.
Summary reports of judgments,
decrees, and orders rendered,
§26-2-39.
ORDINANCES.
Amusement rides.
Municipal regulation, §25-15-69.
Carnival rides.
Local regulation, §25-15-101.
Fire departments.
Authority of counties, municipalities,
etc., §25-3-4.
Processing plants.
Meat, poultry and dairy.
County and municipal ordinances,
§26-2-212.
ORPHAN HOMES.
Fire and other hazards.
Buildings presenting special hazards
to persons or property, §25-2-13.

OVERDOSES.
**Administering opioid antagonists to
save life of person experiencing
overdose.**
Immunity, §26-4-116.2.
Immunity.
Prescribing or administering opioid
antagonists, §26-4-116.2.
OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINES.
Sale, §26-4-30.
OYSTERS AND CLAMS.
Seafood.
Generally, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

P

PACKAGES.
Milk and milk products.
Raw dairy act.
Labeling of bottles, packages and
containers for raw milk,
§26-2-456.
PARKS AND RECREATION.
Fireworks.
Restrictions on use of consumer
fireworks, §25-10-2.

INDEX

PARTNERSHIPS.

Cigarette fire safety.

False certifications, §25-14-6.

PASTEURIZATION.

Defined, §26-2-231.

PATIENT BROKERING.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

PECTIN.

Adulterated foods, §26-2-26.

PENALTIES.

Boiler and pressure vessels.

Civil penalties for violations, §25-15-31.

Failure to inspect, §25-15-25.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature.

Civil penalties for violations, §25-13-8.

Criminal penalties for violations, §25-13-10.

Fires.

Civil penalties.

Violations of provisions, §25-2-37.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §25-12-18.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Failure to renew license or certificate, §25-11-18.

Violations of chapter, §25-11-16.

Food service establishments.

Hair nets or hats.

Civil penalties for failure of food preparers to use, §26-2-373.1.

Meat inspection.

Administrative penalties, §26-2-82.

Judicial review, §26-2-82.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Prescriptions.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Third-party prescription programs.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-14.

PERMITS.

Amusement rides.

Defined, §25-15-51.

Issuance, §25-15-58.

Required, §25-15-55.

PERMITS —Cont'd

Buildings.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-14.

Temporary occupancy permits, §25-2-15.

Carnival rides.

Issuance, §25-15-88.

Required, §25-15-85.

Explosives.

Manufacture, transportation, sale, etc., §25-2-17.

Use of explosives, §25-2-17.

Fire.

State minimum fire safety standards.

Noncompliance with codes, standards, etc.

Fire marshal, state inspectors, code officials, etc, enforcement authority, §25-2-14.2.

Fireworks.

Display of fireworks, §25-10-4.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding of food.

Temporary permits, §26-2-37.

Nonprofit food sales and food service, §26-2-391.

Enforcement by county or municipality issuing permit, §26-2-393.

Food service establishments,

§§26-2-371, 26-2-372.

Milk and milk products.

Processors, manufacturers, etc., §26-2-243.

Raw dairy act, §26-2-454.

Drug residues found in milk, suspension of permit, §26-2-455.

Revocation or cancellation of permit, §26-2-462.

Pharmacies.

Special pharmacy permits, §26-4-114.

PER SE NUISANCES.

Drug abuse treatment programs,

§26-5-18.

PERSONAL CARE HOMES.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Prescription drugs.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Safe medications practice act,

§§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

PESTICIDES.

Meat.

- Contamination.
- Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

PETITIONS.

Amusement ride safety.

- Injunction or mandamus.
- Operation of ride after issuance of temporary cessation order, §25-15-66.

Carnival ride safety.

- Injunction or mandamus, §25-15-96.

Drug and cosmetic act.

- Condemnation of adulterated or misbranded drugs and cosmetics, §26-3-4.

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

Fireworks.

- Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

PEYOTE.

Jug misbranding, §26-3-8.

PFAS CHEMICALS.

Use of Class B firefighting foam with PFAS chemicals, §25-2-41.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES, §§26-4-1 to 26-4-179.

Anti-steering and transparency act.
Prohibited referrals and conflicts of interest, §26-4-119.

Audit of pharmacy records.

- Bill of rights, audit to be conducted in accordance with, §26-4-118.

Auto-injectable epinephrine.

- Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.
- Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

Board of pharmacy.

- State board generally, §§26-4-20 to 26-4-30.

Bonds, surety.

- Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Compounding, §26-4-86.

- Nonresident pharmacies conducting, §26-4-114.1.

Conflicts of interest.

- Anti-steering and transparency act.
- Prohibited referrals and conflicts of interest, §26-4-119.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Construction of chapter, §26-4-2.

- Nonprescription drugs, §26-4-30.

COVID-19.

- Pharmacy technicians administering adult vaccines, §26-4-52.

Definitions, §26-4-5.

- Nuclear pharmacy law, §26-4-171.
- Third-party prescription programs, §26-4-142.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.

- Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

Discipline, §§26-4-60 to 26-4-62.

- Board disciplinary proceedings.
- Applicability of due process and contested case requirements, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

Drug and cosmetic act.

- General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Drug modification therapy certification, §26-4-50.

Drug overdoses.

- Immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.
- Standing prescription order from state health officer.
- Retention of copy, §26-4-116.2.

Drug researchers.

- Defined, §26-4-5.
- Permits, §26-4-49.

Drug supply chain security, compliance with federal provisions, §26-4-115.

Durable medical equipment.

- Powers of state board of pharmacy, §26-4-5.
- Supplier license requirements, §26-4-51.

Duties requiring professional judgment or supervision of pharmacists.

- Prescriptions, §26-4-82.
- Restrictions on dispensing of medicine, drugs or poisons, §26-4-88.

Epinephrine.

- Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.
- Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

Examination of food, drug and cosmetic specimens, §26-4-131.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Federal laws.

Drug supply chain security, compliance with provisions, §26-4-115.

Felony conviction.

Notification to state board, §26-4-28.2.

Hospital pharmacists.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Wholesale drug distributors.

Transfer of drugs from hospital pharmacy to affiliated entity, exception, §26-4-115.

Immunity.

Investigations to enforce license requirements.

Immunity of persons reporting or investigating acts or omissions of licensee or applicant, §26-4-60.

Inactive license status, §26-4-44.1.

Intent of chapter, §26-4-3.

Interns.

License eligibility, §26-4-46.

Renewal of license, §26-4-48.

Validity and duration of license, §26-4-47.

Intracompany drug transfers.

Exceptions to prohibition on certain distributions, §§26-4-113, 26-4-115.

Kidney treatment.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.

Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

Legislative intent, §26-4-3.

Licenses.

Board disciplinary proceedings.

Applicability of due process and contested case requirements, §§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

Conviction of felony, notice to board, §26-4-28.2.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements, §26-4-51.

Grounds for suspension, revocation or denial, §26-4-60.

Inactive license status, §26-4-44.1.

Interns, §§26-4-46 to 26-4-48.

Nonresident pharmacies, §26-4-114.1.

Notice of temporary suspension, §26-4-61.

Nuclear pharmacy law.

Limitation, suspension or revocation of license, §26-4-176.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Licenses —Cont'd

Nuclear pharmacy law —Cont'd

Qualifications of applicant, §26-4-173.

Refusal to grant license, §26-4-177.

Requirements, §26-4-172.

Pharmacies, §§26-4-110, 26-4-111.

Pharmacy residents.

Temporary license, §26-4-43.

Practice of pharmacy, §§26-4-40 to 26-4-50.

Prescriptions, failure to counsel patient, §26-4-85.

Required, §26-4-80.

Restriction for failure to review patient records, §26-4-84.

Roster of licensees, registration and permit holders.

Executive director of state board, §26-4-28.1.

Service members.

Exceptions for active duty service members, §26-4-44.2.

Temporary license, §26-4-43.

Surrender, voluntary, §26-4-60.

Suspension or revocation.

Board hearings, §26-4-60.

Felony conviction.

Failure to notify state board, §26-4-28.2.

Grounds, §26-4-60.

Investigations to enforce license requirements, §26-4-60.

Temporary suspension, notice, §26-4-61.

Violations of disciplinary provisions, §26-4-62.

List of licensees, registration and permit holders.

Executive director of state board, §26-4-28.1.

Mail or other common carriers.

Used by pharmacy to dispense prescriptions, §26-4-60.

Misbranded or adulterated drugs, §26-4-131.

Nonprescription drugs, sale, §26-4-30.

Nonresident pharmacies.

Permit requirements, §26-4-114.1.

Nuclear pharmacy law, §§26-4-170 to 26-4-179.

Citation of law, §26-4-170.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Nuclear pharmacy law —Cont'd

Compliance with laws, §26-4-174.

Definitions, §26-4-171.

Department of natural resources.

Regulation of use of radioactive materials.

Provisions not to repeal authority of department, §26-4-179.

Equipment requirements, §26-4-175.

Labeling.

Requirements, §26-4-174.

Licenses.

Limitation, suspension or revocation of license, §26-4-176.

Qualifications of applicant, §26-4-173.

Refusal to grant license, §26-4-177.

Requirements, §26-4-172.

Operator's permit, §26-4-174.

Quality requirements, §26-4-174.

Records, §26-4-174.

Redistribution of

radiopharmaceuticals, §26-4-174.

Rules and regulations.

Equipment requirements, §26-4-175.

Promulgation by board, §26-4-178.

Title of law, §26-4-170.

Outdated or expired drugs.

Return by wholesale drug distributors, §26-4-115.

Out-of-state mail order pharmacy services.

Nonresident pharmacy permit, §26-4-114.1.

Outsourcing facilities.

Compounding by, §26-4-86.

Distribution or delivery of drugs or devices from unlicensed entity, §26-4-113.

Overdoses.

Immunity for opioid antagonist prescription and administration, §26-4-116.2.

Patient counseling.

Nonresident pharmacies, permit requirements, §26-4-114.1.

Pharmacies, §§26-4-110 to 26-4-119.

Audit of pharmacy records.

Bill of rights, audit to be conducted in accordance with, §26-4-118.

Conditions requiring immediate notification to board, §26-4-112.

Emergency service providers.

Contracts with issuing pharmacy, §26-4-116.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Pharmacies —Cont'd

Licenses, §§26-4-110, 26-4-111.

Mail or other common carriers.

Used to dispense prescriptions, §26-4-60.

Nonresident pharmacy permit, §26-4-114.1.

Prosecution of violations, §26-4-117.

Special pharmacy permits, §26-4-114.

State board of pharmacy.

Pharmacies.

Immediate notification, conditions, §26-4-112.

Third-party prescription programs.

Maximum claims for payments, §26-4-145.

Wholesale drug distributors,

§§26-4-113, 26-4-115.

Price and quantity information.

Requirement that certain wholesale distributors provide, §26-4-115.1.

Pharmacy anti-steering and transparency act.

Prohibited referrals and conflicts of interest, §26-4-119.

Pharmacy residents.

Temporary license, §26-4-43.

Pharmacy technicians.

Adult vaccines, administering, §26-4-52.

Mental or physical examinations.

Requiring, §26-4-28.

Regulation and registration.

Power of state board of pharmacy, §26-4-28.

Remote automated medication system.

Filling, §26-4-28.

Poisons.

Labeling requirements, §26-4-160.

Lists of poisons, §26-4-160.

Prescriptions of practitioners of healing arts.

Part inapplicable to dispensing of poisons in not unusual quantities, §26-4-162.

Record of poisons sold, §26-4-161.

Requirements for sale, §26-4-160.

Violations of part, §26-4-163.

Practice of pharmacy, §§26-4-40 to 26-4-50.

Continuing education requirements, §26-4-45.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Practice of pharmacy —Cont'd

- Defined, §26-4-4.
- Discipline, §§26-4-60 to 26-4-62.
- Drug modification therapy certification, §26-4-50.
- Drug research or permit, §26-4-49.
- Duration of license, §26-4-44.
- Emergency, temporary license, §26-4-43.
- Examination for license, §26-4-41.
- Inactive license status, §26-4-44.1.
- Interns, §26-4-41.
 - License, §26-4-46.
 - Renewal of license, §26-4-48.
 - Validity of license, §26-4-47.
- License requirement, §26-4-40.
- Qualification for license, §26-4-41.
- Reciprocal licensing, §26-4-42.
- Renewal of license, §26-4-44.
- Temporary license, §26-4-43.
- Unlawful practice, §26-4-40.

Prescriptions.

- Generally, §§26-4-80 to 26-4-90.
- Mail or other common carriers.
 - Used to dispense prescriptions, §26-4-60.
- Poisons dispensed by practitioners of healing arts, §26-4-162.
- Prescription medication integrity act, §§26-4-200 to 26-4-205.
 - Definitions, §26-4-201.
 - Pedigrees for prescription drugs, §26-4-202.
- Short title, §26-4-200.
- Violations.
 - Order to cease distribution of drug, §26-4-203.
 - Penalties, §26-4-205.
 - Prohibited acts, §26-4-204.
- Third-party prescription programs, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.
 - Administrators.
 - Bond, §26-4-146.
 - Registered administrators, §26-4-146.
 - Suspension, revocation or refusal, §26-4-146.
 - Approval of programs by commissioner of insurance.
 - Required, §26-4-143.
 - Cancellation of programs.
 - Identification card use by enrollee after cancellation, §26-4-147.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Prescriptions —Cont'd

- Third-party prescription programs
 - Cont'd
 - Civil actions for damages, §26-4-148.
 - Claims for payments by pharmacies.
 - Maximum claims, §26-4-145.
 - Definitions, §26-4-142.
 - Disapproval of programs, §26-4-143.
 - Exemption of submission and approval requirements, §26-4-143.
 - Identification card.
 - Liability for enrollee's use when program canceled, §26-4-147.
 - Legislative findings, §26-4-141.
 - Maximum claims for payments by pharmacies, §26-4-145.
 - Penalties for violations, §26-4-148.
 - Requirements of programs generally, §26-4-144.
 - Revocation or suspension of approval, §26-4-143.
 - Short title.
 - Third-party prescription program law, §26-4-140.
 - Submission to commissioner of insurance.
 - Required, §26-4-143.
 - Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Radiopharmaceuticals.

- Nuclear pharmacy law, §§26-4-170 to 26-4-179.

Records.

- Audit of pharmacy records.
 - Bill of rights, audit to be conducted in accordance with, §26-4-118.
- Poisons sold, §26-4-161.

Referral of patients to services in which pharmacist has investment interests.

- Anti-steering and transparency act.
 - Prohibited referrals and conflicts of interest, §26-4-119.

Registration.

- Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Remote automated medication system.

- Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.
- Skilled nursing facility or hospice.
 - Defined, §26-4-5.
 - Not considered vending machines, §26-4-89.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Restrictions on dispensing of medicine, drugs or poisons,
§26-4-88.

Roster of licensees, registration and permit holders.

Executive director of state board,
§26-4-28.1.

Safe medications practice act,
§§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Sale of poisons generally, §§26-4-160
to 26-4-163.

School or college of pharmacy,
§26-4-114.

Service members.

Defined, §26-4-44.2.

Licenses.

Exceptions for active duty service
members, §26-4-44.2.

Temporary license, §26-4-43.

Short title, §26-4-1.

State board of pharmacy, §§26-4-20 to
26-4-30.

Actions involving members, venue,
§26-4-20.

Appointment, §26-4-22.

Eligibility, §26-4-21.

Authority, §26-4-28.

Compensation.

Executive director, §26-4-20.

Expense reimbursement, §26-4-25.

Continuation, §26-4-20.

Conviction of felony by licensee, notice
to board, §26-4-28.2.

Creation, §26-4-30.

Department of community health,
division of, §26-4-20.

Drugs and narcotics agency, §26-4-29.

Inspections and investigations on
behalf of state board of
pharmacy, §26-4-28.

Durable medical equipment.

Powers of state board, §26-4-5.

Supplier license requirements,
§26-4-51.

Duties, §26-4-28.

Eligibility, §26-4-21.

Enforcement of chapter, §26-4-20.

Executive director.

Compensation, §26-4-20.

Duties, §26-4-28.1.

Investigations to enforce license
requirements, §26-4-60.

Investigative interviews, §26-4-28.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

State board of pharmacy —Cont'd

Executive director —Cont'd

Powers, §26-4-28.1.

Qualifications for office, §26-4-28.1.

Serving of notices and legal process,
§26-4-24.

Failure to attend meetings.

Removal, §26-4-23.

Inspections and investigations,
§26-4-28.

Licensee disciplinary proceedings.

Applicability of due process and
contested case requirements,
§§26-4-26, 26-4-60.

Meetings, §26-4-24.

Notice and quorum, §26-4-26.

Open meetings, §26-4-26.

Pharmacies.

Duties as to licenses generally,
§26-4-110.

Pharmacy technicians.

Powers, §26-4-28.

Powers, §26-4-28.

Prescriptions, security paper for hard
copy of electronic drug order.

Seal of approval of board,
§26-4-80.1.

Prosecution of pharmacy violations,
§26-4-117.

Quorum, §26-4-26.

Reimbursements, §26-4-25.

Remote automated medication
systems.

Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.

Removal of member, §26-4-23.

Rulemaking authority, §26-4-27.

Licensing, §26-4-28.

Safe medications practice act.

Rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

Serving of notices and legal process on
executive director, §26-4-24.

Terms of members, §26-4-22.

Vacancies, §26-4-22.

Venue of actions involving members,
§26-4-20.

**Supply chain security, compliance
with federal provisions,**
§26-4-115.

Third-party logistics providers.

Distribution or delivery of drugs or
devices from unlicensed entity,
§26-4-113.

Licenses.

Rules and regulations of state board,
§26-4-28.

PHARMACISTS AND PHARMACIES

—Cont'd

Third-party prescription programs,
§§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Administrators.

Bond, §26-4-146.

Registered administrators,
§26-4-146.

Suspension, revocation or refusal to
register, §26-4-146.

Approval of programs, §26-4-143.

Cancellation of programs.

Liability for use of identification
cards after, §26-4-147.

Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Claims for payments by pharmacies.
Maximum claims, §26-4-145.

Definitions, §26-4-142.

Disapproval of programs, §26-4-143.

Exemptions from submission and
approval requirements, §26-4-143.

Identification cards.

Use after programs canceled.

Enrollee's liability, §26-4-147.

Legislative findings, §26-4-141.

Penalties for violations, §26-4-148.

Requirements of programs generally,
§26-4-144.

Revocation or suspension of approval,
§26-4-143.

Short title.

Third-party prescription program
law, §26-4-140.

Submission of programs for approval,
§26-4-143.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

Title of act, §26-4-1.

Unprofessional conduct.

Grounds for suspension, revocation or
denial of license, §26-4-60.

Wholesale drug distributors,
§§26-4-113, 26-4-115.

Price and quantity information.

Requirement that certain wholesale
distributors provide,
§26-4-115.1.

**PHARMACY ANTI-STEERING AND
TRANSPARENCY ACT,** §26-4-119.

**PHARMACY AUDIT BILL OF
RIGHTS,** §26-4-118.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS.

Pharmacy technicians, §26-4-28.

PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS.

Auto-injectable epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Composite medical board.

Safe medications practice act.

Rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

Dispensing drugs, §26-4-130.

Drug overdoses.

Practitioners.

Immunity for opioid antagonist
prescription and administration,
§26-4-116.2.

Durable medical equipment.

Supplier license requirements.
Exemptions, §26-4-51.

Epinephrine.

Auto-injectable epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Poisons.

Dispensing poisons in not unusual
quantities upon prescriptions,
§26-4-162.

Prescriptions.

Generally, §§26-4-80 to 26-4-90.

Poisons dispensed in not unusual
quantities upon prescriptions,
§26-4-162.

PIGS.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to
26-2-133.

PLANT-BASED MEAT.

Advertising requirements, §26-2-152.

PLAYGROUNDS.

Amusement ride safety.

Chapter inapplicable to playground
equipment, §25-15-64.

Carnival ride safety.

Exemption of playground equipment,
§25-15-94.

PLUMBERS.

Sprinkler system repairs, §25-11-13.

PODIATRY.

Dispensing drugs, §26-4-130.

Poisons.

Dispensing poisons in not unusual
quantities upon prescriptions,
§26-4-162.

PODIATRY —Cont'd

Prescriptions.

Poisons dispensed in not unusual quantities upon prescriptions, §26-4-162.

POISONS, §§26-4-160 to 26-4-163.

Enumeration, §26-4-160.

Food.

Adulteration or misbranding.

Addition of poisonous or deleterious substances in food, §26-2-27.

Labeling requirements, §26-4-160.

Lists, §26-4-160.

Meat.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

Prescriptions by practitioners of healing arts.

Part inapplicable to dispensing of poisons in not unusual quantities, §26-4-162.

Records.

Druggists or pharmacists, §26-4-161.

Requirements for sales, §26-4-160.

Schedules, §26-4-160.

Violations of part, §26-4-163.

POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

Amusement ride regulations, §25-15-69.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

Limitations on authority to regulate, §25-15-29.

Carnival ride regulation, §25-15-101.

POULTRY.

Contamination.

Animals suspected of bearing residue causing contaminated meat, §§26-2-180 to 26-2-186.

Eggs.

General provisions, §§26-2-260 to 26-2-274.

Mobile sales, §§26-2-410 to 26-2-413.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy processing plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

POWDERED MILK.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

PRACTICE OF PHARMACY,

§§26-4-40 to 26-4-50.

PREGNANCY.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Priority admissions for drug dependent pregnant females, §26-5-20.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Pregnant females, priority admissions, §26-5-59.

Substance abuse.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Pregnant females, priority admissions, §26-5-59.

PRESCRIPTIONS, §§26-4-80 to 26-4-90.

Auto-injectable epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

Biological products, substitution of interchangeable products, §26-4-81.

“Brand necessary” designation by practitioner, §26-4-81.

Compensation for professional pharmacy care, §26-4-90.

Compounding medications, §26-4-86.

Nonresident pharmacies, §26-4-114.1.

Confidentiality of information, §26-4-80.

Controlled substances, §26-4-80.

Storage and handling, §26-4-87.

Dangerous drugs.

Storage and handling, §26-4-87.

Date of dispensing.

Recorded by pharmacist filling prescription, §26-4-80.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.

Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

Dispensing, §26-4-80.

Drug and cosmetic act.

General provisions, §§26-3-1 to 26-3-24.

Name and address of manufacturer on label, §26-3-9.

Electronic data prescription drug order, §26-4-80.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Electronic drug orders, §26-4-80.

Electronic visual image prescription drug order, §26-4-80.

Defined, §26-4-5.

PRESCRIPTIONS —Cont'd

Epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for schools and other authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Places of public accommodation, authority to stock, §26-4-116.1.

Eye drops.

Refilling without authorization to prevent unintended interruptions in drug therapy, §26-4-80.

Facsimile or computer transmitted drug orders.

Requirements, §26-4-80.

Functions requiring professional judgment of pharmacist or intern, §26-4-88.

Generic substitutions, §26-4-81.

Hard copy prescription drug order.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Use of security paper for, §26-4-80.1.

Security paper defined, §26-4-5.

Hospitals using remote order entry, §26-4-80.

Hurricane or other state of emergency.

Dispensing of prescription prior to regular refill date, §26-4-80.

Inability to contact practitioner for refill authorization.

Authority of pharmacists to dispense supply of medication, §26-4-80.

Interaction precautions.

Patient records, §26-4-83.

Invalidity of prescription.

Termination of practitioner-patient relationship, §26-4-80.

Kidney treatment.

Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs. Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

Label requirements when generic drug substituted for brand name, §26-4-81.

Legend drug.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Liability of pharmacist for prescriptions, §26-4-80.

License requirement, §26-4-88.

License restriction for failure to review patient records, §26-4-84.

Mail or other common carriers.

Used to dispense prescriptions, §26-4-60.

Maintenance medication for chronic illnesses, §26-4-80.

PRESCRIPTIONS —Cont'd

Ophthalmic topical products.

Refilling without authorization to prevent unintended interruptions in drug therapy, §26-4-80.

Optimizing drug therapy, §26-4-85.

Out-patient prescription drug orders, §26-4-80.

Patient counseling, §26-4-85.

Patient record or profile.

Confidentiality, §26-4-80.

Patient records, §26-4-83.

Failure to review, §26-4-84.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-1 to 26-4-179.

Pharmacy license requirements, §26-4-110.

Poisons.

Dispensing by practitioners of healing arts upon prescriptions, §26-4-162.

Prescription drug.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Prescription drug order.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Prescription medication integrity act, §§26-4-200 to 26-4-205.

Definitions, §26-4-201.

Pedigrees for prescription drugs, §26-4-202.

Short title, §26-4-200.

Violations.

Order to cease distribution of drug, §26-4-203.

Penalties, §26-4-205.

Prohibited acts, §26-4-204.

Professional judgment.

Pharmacist to exercise when filling or refilling prescriptions, §26-4-80.

Refills, §26-4-80.

Remote automated medication system.

Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.

Skilled nursing facility or hospice.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Not considered vending machines, §26-4-89.

Remote order entry, use by hospitals, §26-4-80.

Remuneration for professional pharmacy care, §26-4-90.

Responsibility of pharmacist, §26-4-82.

Safe medications practice act, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

PRESCRIPTIONS —Cont'd

Security paper.

Defined, §26-4-5.

Use for hard copy prescription orders, §26-4-80.1.

Hard copy prescription order defined, §26-4-5.

Signature of prescribing practitioner.

Required, §26-4-80.

Sterile drugs, compounding for provision to practitioners,
§26-4-86.

Nonresident pharmacies, §26-4-114.1.

Storage and handling of controlled substances, §26-4-87.

Substituting generic drugs or interchangeable biological products, §26-4-81.

Termination of practitioner-patient relationship.

Invalidity of prescription, §26-4-80.

Third-party prescription programs,
§§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Administrators.

Bond, §26-4-146.

Registration, §26-4-146.

Approval of programs, §26-4-143.

Cancellation of programs.

Enrollee's liability for use of identification card, §26-4-147.

Civil action for damages, §26-4-148.

Claims for payments by pharmacies.

Maximum claims, §26-4-145.

Definitions, §26-4-142.

Disapproval of programs, §26-4-143.

Exemptions from approval requirements, §26-4-143.

Identification cards used after cancellation of programs.

Enrollee's liability, §26-4-147.

Legislative findings, §26-4-141.

Penalties for violations of part, §26-4-148.

Requirements of programs generally, §26-4-144.

Revocation or suspension of approval, §26-4-143.

Short title.

Third-party prescription program law, §26-4-140.

Submission for approval, §26-4-143.

Violations of part, §26-4-148.

PRESCRIPTIONS —Cont'd

Topical ophthalmic products.

Refilling without authorization to prevent unintended interruptions in drug therapy, §26-4-80.

Valid prescription drug order.

Prescription drugs dispensed pursuant to only, §26-4-80.

Vending machines selling drugs,
§26-4-89.

PRESSURE VESSELS, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

PRISONS AND PRISONERS.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer fireworks, §25-10-2.

PRISON TERMS.

Bread and flour.

Violations of article, §26-2-297.

Drug researcher permits, §26-4-49.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature, §25-13-10.

Fish.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-320.

Food processing plants.

Introduction of adulterated food into commerce, §26-2-27.1.

Meat.

Dog meat.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Horse meat.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Meat inspection.

Distribution of adulterated articles, §26-2-88.

Fraud, §26-2-88.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Prescription medications integrity act violations, §26-4-205.

Unlawful practice, §26-4-40.

Wholesale drug distributors, §26-4-115.

Prescription drugs.

Prescription medications integrity act violations, §26-4-205.

Seafood.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-320.

INDEX

PRIVILEGES AND PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Drug dependent persons, §26-5-17.

PROCESSING PLANTS.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.

Commissioner.

Defined, §26-2-200.

Inspection, §26-2-203.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-202.

Counties.

Ordinances, §26-2-212.

Definitions, §26-2-200.

Drainage, §26-2-207.

Evidence.

Samples, §26-2-204.

Exceptions for products or livestock slaughtered for home consumption, §26-2-205.

Federal acts.

Applicability of provisions to individuals and entities governed by, §26-2-213.1.

Horse slaughter operations.

Exceptions, §26-2-214.

Injunctions, §26-2-213.

Inspections.

Authority of commissioner, §26-2-204.

Cost basis, §26-2-206.

Livestock slaughtered for sale as food, §26-2-205.

Marking system employed, §26-2-205.

Power of inspection, §26-2-203.

Right of entry, §26-2-203.

Wholesomeness inspection, §26-2-205.

Cost basis, §26-2-206.

Inspectors.

Designation, §26-2-201.

Licenses.

Meat processing plants, §26-2-209.

Fees, §26-2-209.

Notice and hearing, §26-2-209.

Revocation or suspension, §26-2-209.

Poultry processing plant.

Fees, §26-2-210.

Notice and hearing, §26-2-210.

On file at place of business, §26-2-210.

PROCESSING PLANTS —Cont'd Meat, poultry and dairy —Cont'd

Licenses —Cont'd

Poultry processing plant —Cont'd

Suspension or revocation, §26-2-210.

Transferability, §26-2-210.

Meat.

Defined, §26-2-200.

Meat products.

Defined, §26-2-200.

Municipal corporations.

Ordinances, §26-2-212.

Ordinances.

County and municipal ordinances, §26-2-212.

Records.

Maintenance of records, §26-2-211.

Rules and regulations.

Federal acts.

Applicability of provisions to individuals and entities governed by, §26-2-213.1.

Promulgation, §26-2-202.

Violations.

Misdemeanor, §26-2-215.

Samples.

Evidentiary value, §26-2-204.

Taking and testing, §26-2-204.

Sanitary conditions.

Correction of unsanitary conditions, §26-2-204.

Dairy equipment and premises maintained in clean and sanitary condition, §26-2-207.

Products produced, manufactured, transported, etc., under other than sanitary conditions, §26-2-208.

Supervision and control, §26-2-201.

When conditions other than sanitary deemed to exist, §26-2-208.

Soft drinks.

Applicability of article to dairy or milk processing plants, §26-2-356.

Standards.

Adoption of standards and specifications, §26-2-205.

Not less than federal standards, §26-2-202.

Violations, §26-2-215.

Statistics on animals and poultry slaughtered, §26-2-211.

Violations of provisions.

Injunctions, §26-2-213.

INDEX

PROCESSING PLANTS —Cont'd
Meat, poultry and dairy —Cont'd
Violations of provisions —Cont'd
Misdemeanors, §26-2-215.

Water.

Supply of clean pure water,
§26-2-207.

PROFESSIONS AND BUSINESSES.
Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

General provisions, §§25-12-1 to
25-12-22.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

General provisions, §§25-11-1 to
25-11-19.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

General provisions, §§26-4-1 to
26-4-179.

Pharmacies generally, §§26-4-110 to
26-4-119.

Utility facility protection.

Professional license discipline to
enforce provisions, §25-9-14.

PROPERTY.

Blasting.

General provisions, §§25-8-1 to
25-8-12.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1
to 25-11-19.

PROPERTY INSURANCE.

Fire insurance.

Losses.

Release of fire loss information,
§25-2-33.

Immunity from liability, §25-2-33.

Reports.

Insurance companies, §25-2-32.

PROSTATE CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

PROSTATE GLAND DISORDERS.

False advertising, §26-3-13.

PROTEIN.

Textured vegetable protein,
§26-2-378.

PROXIMITY.

Blasting areas, §25-8-3.

PUBLICATION.

Fire departments.

Nomenclature and symbols.

Use in connection with publication.

Prohibited act, §§25-13-4, 25-13-5.

PUBLIC HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Assistance in enforcement, §26-3-18.

Food service establishments.

Generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES.

Safety fire commissioner.

General provisions, §§25-2-1 to
25-2-4.1.

PUBLIC SAFETY.

Amusement Ride Safety Act.

General provisions, §§25-15-50 to
25-15-69.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act.

General provisions, §§25-15-10 to
25-15-31.

Carnival Ride Safety Act.

General provisions, §§25-15-80 to
25-15-101.

Department of public safety.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Safety fire commissioner.

Cooperation with commissioner,
§25-2-34.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

PUBLIC UTILITIES.

Blasting.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

Excavations.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to
25-9-14.

PYROTECHNICS, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

INDEX

Q

QUARANTINE.

Meat.

- Contamination.
- Animals suspected of bearing residue causing, §§26-2-182, 26-2-183.

R

RABBITS.

Meat inspection.

- General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

RACETRACKS.

Fire safety standards.

- Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

RADIOPHARMACEUTICALS.

Nuclear pharmacy law, §§26-4-170 to 26-4-179.

RAILROADS.

Blasting in proximity to, §25-8-3.

Depots.

- Milk and milk products.
- Unlawful failure to ship from depot, §26-2-249.

RATITES.

Meat inspection.

- General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

RAW DAIRY ACT, §§26-2-450 to 26-2-466.

REAL PROPERTY.

Blasting.

- General provisions, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems, §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1 to 25-11-19.

REBATES.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

RECIPROCITY.

Fish.

- Wholesale fish dealers' licenses, §26-2-312.

Pharmacist licenses, §26-4-42.

RECONSTITUTED MILK.

Defined, §26-2-231.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

RECORDS.

Amusement ride safety.

- Owner recordkeeping, §25-15-59.
- Variances from standards and regulations, §25-15-63.

Amusement ride standards and regulations.

- Variances, §25-15-63.

Blasting.

- Maintenance, §25-8-8.
- Minimum data, §25-8-8.

Boiler and pressure vessel special inspectors, §25-15-24.

Carnival ride safety.

- Maintenance, inspection and repair records, §25-15-89.
- Variances from standards and regulations, §25-15-93.

Cigarette fire safety.

- Examination of books and records, §25-14-8.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Drug dependent persons records, §26-5-12.
- Confidentiality, §26-5-17.

Meat.

- Meat processors and related industries.
- Maintenance and inspection of records, §26-2-132.

Milk and milk products.

- Maintenance, examination, etc., §26-2-246.
- Raw dairy act, §26-2-463.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

- Confidentiality of patient information, §26-5-56.
- Records of licensees, §26-5-51.

Nuclear pharmacies, §26-4-174.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Audit of pharmacy records.
- Pharmacy audit bill of rights, §26-4-118.
- Poisons sold, §26-4-161.
- Practitioners dispensing drugs, §26-4-130.

Poisons.

- Druggists' or pharmacists' records, §26-4-161.

INDEX

RECORDS —Cont'd

Prescriptions.

- Patient record systems, §26-4-83.
- Pharmacist license restriction for failure to review, §26-4-84.

Processing plants.

- Meat, poultry and dairy.
- Maintenance of records, §26-2-211.

Substance abuse.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
- Confidentiality, §26-5-17.
- Drug dependent persons treated or advised, §26-5-12.
- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
- Confidentiality of patient information, §26-5-56.
- Records of licensees, §26-5-51.

REFERRAL OF PATIENTS BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

- Rewards for patient referrals prohibited, §26-5-49.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Anti-steering and transparency act.
- Prohibited referrals and conflicts of interest, §26-4-119.

REFILLS OF PRESCRIPTIONS, §26-4-80.

REFRIGERATION.

Eggs.

- Requirements, §26-2-272.

REGISTRATION.

Blasting.

- Certificates, §25-8-7.

Carnival ride safety.

- Itinerant carnival rides registered with in-state agent, §25-15-99.

Eggs.

- Wholesalers, retailers, dealers, etc., §26-2-262.

Meat.

- Meat processors and related industries.
- Dealers in dead, dying, disabled or diseased animals, §26-2-131.

Pharmacies.

- Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

REGISTRATION —Cont'd

Prescriptions.

- Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

Third-party prescription program administrators, §26-4-146.

RENAL DISEASES.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

- Dialysis devices or dialysate drugs.
- Inapplicability of provisions, §26-4-6.

RENDERING AND DISPOSAL PLANTS.

Records, §26-2-132.

REPORTS.

Accidents.

- Amusement ride accident reports, §25-15-61.

- Carnival ride safety, §25-15-91.

Amusement ride accident reports, §25-15-61.

Arson.

- State fire marshal and insurers, §25-2-33.1.

Boiler and pressure vessel special inspectors, §25-15-24.

Burn injuries.

- Serious burn injuries.
- Reports to safety fire division, §25-2-32.1.
- Investigation of reported injuries, §25-2-32.2.

Carnival ride safety.

- Accident reports, §25-15-91.

Cigarette fire safety.

- Commissioner effectiveness review and report, §25-14-3.
- Reports of testing, §25-14-3.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

- Reporting requirements, §26-5-23.

Drug and cosmetic act.

- Duty of prosecuting attorney upon report of violation, §26-3-5.
- State board of pharmacy, §26-3-19.

Fires.

- Incidents of fire.
- Reports to safety fire commissioner, §25-2-32.
- Serious burn injuries.
- Reports to safety fire division, §25-2-32.1.
- Investigation of reported injuries, §25-2-32.2.

Meat inspection.

- Failure to file, §26-2-81.

INDEX

REPORTS —Cont'd

Meat inspection —Cont'd

False reports, §26-2-81.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Reporting requirements, §26-5-23.

RESORTS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

RESPIRATORY DISEASES.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

RESTAURANTS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

RETAILERS.

Fireworks, consumer, §25-10-2.

Distributors, license requirements, §25-10-5.1.

REVENUE AND TAXATION.

Eggs.

Exemption of producers from taxing and licensing, §26-2-264.

REWARDS.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Rewards for patient referrals prohibited, §26-5-49.

RIBOFLAVIN.

Flour.

Vitamins and ingredients required.

B vitamins, §§26-2-291 to 26-2-293.

ROMAN CANDLES.

Fireworks.

Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Amusement ride safety.

Formulation of standards and regulation, §25-15-53.

RULES AND REGULATIONS —Cont'd

Amusement ride safety —Cont'd

Standards and regulations defined, §25-15-51.

Variances from standards and regulations, §25-15-63.

Blasting.

Promulgation, §25-8-9.

Boilers and pressure vessels,

§25-15-13.

Cigarette fire safety.

Rules promulgation by commissioner, §25-14-7.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §26-5-6.

Drug and cosmetic act.

Promulgation, §26-3-16.

Eggs.

Candlers and graders.

Promulgation of rules and regulations regarding qualifications, §26-2-272.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-267.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Standards for systems and extinguishers, §25-12-15.

Fires.

Safety fire commissioner.

Adoption, §25-2-4.

Fire sprinkler contractors.

Promulgation, §25-11-12.

Fish.

Sanitation, distribution and transportation.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-315.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Promulgation, §§26-2-34, 26-2-35.

Food service establishments.

County boards of health.

Promulgation by boards, §26-2-373.

Department of public health.

Promulgation by department, §26-2-373.

Permits.

Municipal rules and regulations, §26-2-371.

Food sold from mobile vehicles,

§26-2-412.

Meat.

Contaminated meat.

Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-181.

INDEX

RULES AND REGULATIONS —Cont'd

Meat —Cont'd

Deceptive advertising of meat.

Promulgation of rules and regulations, §26-2-151.

Horse meat.

Sale of horse meat.

Promulgation of regulations, §26-2-159.

Storage and handling of carcasses, meat and meat food products, §26-2-113.

Meat inspection.

Commissioner.

Promulgation, §26-2-80.

Compliance with, §26-2-101.

Milk and milk products.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-233.

Nuclear pharmacy law.

Equipment requirements, §26-4-175.

Promulgation of rules, §26-4-178.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Drug researcher permits, §26-4-49.

State board of pharmacy, §26-4-27.

Prescriptions.

Compounding of medications, §26-4-86.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.

Promulgation, §26-2-202.

Violations.

Misdemeanor, §26-2-215.

Seafood.

Sanitation, distribution and transportation.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-315.

Soft drinks.

Promulgation, §26-2-353.

S

SAFE MEDICATIONS PRACTICE

ACT, §§26-4-210 to 26-4-214.

Collaboration by medical staff on drug therapy management, §26-4-213.

Composite medical board rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

Definitions, §26-4-212.

Legislative intent, §26-4-211.

Short title, §26-4-210.

State board of pharmacy rules and regulations, §26-4-214.

SAFETY.

Amusement ride safety act.

General provisions, §§25-15-50 to 25-15-69.

Blasting.

Regulation of operations generally, §§25-8-1 to 25-8-12.

Boiler and pressure vessel safety act.

General provisions, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

Carnival ride safety act.

General provisions, §§25-15-80 to 25-15-101.

Department of public safety.

Fire academy generally, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Fireworks.

Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

Food safety instruction.

Nonprofit food sales and food service, §26-2-392.

Scaffolding design, §25-15-110.

Staging design, §25-15-110.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER.

General provisions, §§25-2-1 to 25-2-4.1.

SALADS.

Food labeling standards, §26-2-392.

SALES.

Drug and cosmetic act.

New drugs, §26-3-10.

Eggs.

Classification, §26-2-261.

Invoices.

Dealers' invoices furnished to department of agriculture, §26-2-265.

Placards, §26-2-269.

Unlawful sales by wholesalers, retailers, etc., §26-2-264.

Withhold from sale orders, §26-2-271.

Meat.

Disclosure of price per pound, §26-2-152.

Dog meat.

Label on packages, §26-2-160.

Sale for human consumption, §26-2-160.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Horse meat.

Label, §26-2-157.

INDEX

SALES —Cont'd

Meat —Cont'd

Horse meat —Cont'd

Regulations.

Promulgation, §26-2-159.

Seller to inform purchaser,
§26-2-158.

Signs, §26-2-157.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-161.

Legislative intent, §26-2-150.

Meat processors and related
industries.

Selling dead, dying, disabled or
diseased animals, §26-2-130.

Net weight, §26-2-2.

Partial or whole carcasses, §26-2-153.

Violations of provisions, §26-2-154.

Milk and milk products.

Condensed or evaporated milk,
§26-2-242.

Raw whole milk, §26-2-242.

Standards and requirements,
§26-2-242.

Ungraded milk, §26-2-242.

Poisons.

Requirements generally, §§26-4-160 to
26-4-163.

Seafood.

Net weight, §26-2-2.

SALMONELLA.

Raw dairy act.

Chemical, bacteriological, and
temperature standards, §26-2-458.

SAMPLING.

Meat contamination, §26-2-183.

Raw dairy act.

Sampling and testing of raw milk for
public health purposes, §26-2-457.

SANITATION.

Soft drinks.

Inspections, §26-2-355.

Standards and specifications,
§26-2-352.

SCAFFOLDING.

Requirements for design, §25-15-110.

SCALLOPS.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to
26-2-320.

SCARLET FEVER.

Drug advertisement deemed false.

Cures, §26-3-13.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION.

Auto-injectable epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Blasting in proximity to school,
§25-8-3.

Blood glucose checks.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe ready-to-use glucagon
for schools, §26-4-116.4.

Diabetes.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe ready-to-use glucagon
for schools, §26-4-116.4.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

General provisions, §§26-5-1 to
26-5-23.

Epinephrine.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for schools and other
authorized entities, §26-4-116.1.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Fire departments.

Conducting programs in fire
prevention and safety, §25-3-1.

Firefighters.

Fire academy, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Fire prevention programs, §25-2-31.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

Food service establishments.

Nonprofit schools.

Exemption, §26-2-373.

Georgia fire academy act.

General provisions, §§25-7-1 to 25-7-8.

Student health.

Asthma medication.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe certain asthma
medication for schools,
§26-4-116.3.

Glucagon.

Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe ready-to-use glucagon
for schools, §26-4-116.4.

SEAFOOD, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

Administration of article, §26-2-311.

Commissioner.

Administration of article, §26-2-311.

Definitions, §26-2-310.

Distribution.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

INDEX

SEAFOOD —Cont'd

Fish generally, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

Inspections, §26-2-318.

Mobile sales, §§26-2-410 to 26-2-413.

Rules and regulations.

Sanitation, distribution and transportation.

Promulgation by commissioner, §26-2-315.

Sanitation.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

Transportation.

Rules and regulations, §26-2-315.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-320.

SEALS AND SEALED

INSTRUMENTS.

Pharmacy, state board.

Prescriptions, security paper for hard copy of electronic drug order.

Seal of approval of board, §26-4-80.1.

SEARCHES AND SEIZURES.

Cigarette fire safety.

Seizure of non compliant cigarettes, §25-14-6.

Fireworks.

Contraband, seizure and disposition, §25-10-6.

Meat inspections.

Seizure and condemnation of carcasses, meat, etc., §26-2-85.

SEESAWS.

Ride operators' insurance.

Exemptions, §25-15-94.

SEISMOGRAPHS.

Blasting.

Use of measurements, §25-8-5.

SELF-SERVICE GASOLINE

STATIONS.

Hold-open latches.

Use, §25-2-16.

SERVICE OF PROCESS.

Fire extinguishers and suppression systems.

Notice of hearing regarding license or permit revocation or suspension, §25-12-18.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

State board of pharmacy.

Service of notice and legal process, §26-4-24.

State board of pharmacy.

Service of notices and legal process, §26-4-24.

SETTLEMENTS.

Utility facility protection.

Settlement of liability, §25-9-14.

SHEEP.

Meat inspection.

General provisions, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

SHELLFISH.

Seafood generally, §§26-2-310 to 26-2-320.

SHERBET.

Milk and milk products generally, §§26-2-230 to 26-2-250.

SHERIFFS.

Arson.

Arrest.

Payment, §25-2-35.

Fires.

Assistance in determining causes of fire.

Payment, §25-2-35.

SHOPPING CENTERS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

SHOPPING MALLS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Fire and other hazards.

Buildings presenting special hazards to persons or property, §25-2-13.

SHORT ORDER CAFES.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

SIGNATURES.

Prescription drug orders, §26-4-80.

SIGNS.

Egg sales, §26-2-269.

Fireworks.

Distributors of consumer fireworks, signage required, §25-10-5.1.

Food service establishments.

Meat containing extenders, §26-2-378.

SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES.

Prescription drugs.

- Remote automated medication system.
Defined, §26-4-5.
- Licensure and regulation, §26-4-28.
- Not considered vending machines,
§26-4-89.

SKIN CANCER.

Fire departments.

- Insurance coverage for members
diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

SKYROCKETS.

Fireworks.

- Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

**Meat, poultry and dairy processing
plants, §§26-2-200 to 26-2-215.**

SMOKE DETECTORS.

**Automatic fire alarm systems using
automatic smoke detectors.**

- Installation, §25-2-40.

**Free smoke detectors for those in
need, §25-2-40.**

Landmark museum buildings.

- Required where buildings contain
residential units, §25-2-13.

**Required in dwellings and dwelling
units, §25-2-40.**

SODA FOUNTAINS.

**Food service establishments
generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.**

SOFT DRINKS, §§26-2-350 to 26-2-357.

Bottled soft drinks.

- Defined, §26-2-350.

Commissioner.

- Defined, §26-2-350.
- Promulgation of rules and regulations,
§26-2-353.

Dairy or milk processing plants.

- Applicability of article, §26-2-356.

Definitions, §26-2-350.

Hearings.

- Suspension or revocation of license,
§26-2-354.

Inspections.

- Sanitary inspection of buildings, area,
vehicle, etc., §26-2-355.

Licenses.

- Manufacture and bottling, §26-2-351.
- Separate license for each business or
bottling or manufacturing plant,
§26-2-351.

SOFT DRINKS —Cont'd

Licenses —Cont'd

- Suspension or revocation, §26-2-354.

Motor vehicles.

- Sanitary inspection, §26-2-355.

Rules and regulations.

- Promulgation, §26-2-353.

Sanitation.

- Inspection of buildings, area, vehicle,
etc., used in manufacturing,
§26-2-355.
- Standards and specifications,
§26-2-352.

Soft drink syrup.

- Defined, §26-2-350.
- Sanitary standards and specifications,
§26-2-352.

Violation of provisions, §26-2-357.

SOFT DRINK SYRUP.

Defined, §26-2-350.

Sanitary standards, §26-2-352.

SOLE PROPRIETORSHIPS.

Cigarette fire safety.

- False certifications, §25-14-6.

SOLICITATION.

Fire departments.

- Nomenclature and symbols.
- Use in connection with solicitation.
- Prohibited act, §25-13-4.

SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.

Amusement ride safety act.

- State not liable under act, §25-15-68.

**Boiler and pressure vessel safety
act.**

- State liability not created, §25-15-30.

Carnival ride safety act.

- State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Fires.

- Carrying out provisions of chapter,
§25-2-38.1.

SPARKLERS.

Fireworks.

- Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to
25-10-12.

SPIRIT OF THE LAW.

Insurance.

- Variances, §25-15-63.

**Pressure vessel regulations,
§25-15-14.**

SPLIT LEVELS.

Smoke detectors.

- Dwellings, dwelling units and other
facilities with, §25-2-40.

INDEX

SPORTS ARENAS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine
in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

SPORTS LEAGUES.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine
in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

SPRING WATER.

Advertising, §26-2-4.

Defined, §26-2-4.

Labeling, §26-2-4.

Sale, §26-2-4.

SPRINKLERS.

**Fire extinguishers and suppression
systems,** §§25-12-1 to 25-12-22.

Fire sprinkler contractors, §§25-11-1
to 25-11-19.

STADIUMS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine
in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards,
§25-2-13.

STAGING.

Requirements for design, §25-15-110.

STATE CHEMIST.

**Examination of food, drugs and
cosmetics,** §26-4-131.

STATE OF GEORGIA.

Amusement ride safety act.

State liability not created by chapter,
§25-15-68.

Boiler and pressure vessel safety act.

State liability not created by chapter,
§25-15-30.

Carnival ride safety act.

State liability not created, §25-15-100.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

STATE PATROL.

Fires.

Safety fire commissioner.
Cooperation with commissioner,
§25-2-34.

STATISTICS.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy.
Animals and poultry slaughtered,
§26-2-211.

STAYS.

Commonsense consumption act.

Weight gain or obesity from long-term
consumption of food.
Non-liability of food distributors.
Action alleging exception to
non-liability.
Stay pending motion to dismiss,
§26-2-435.

STOP WORK ORDERS.

Fires.

State minimum fire safety standards.
Noncompliance with codes,
standards, etc.
Fire marshal, state inspectors,
code officials, etc, enforcement
authority, §25-2-14.2.

STORAGE.

Fireworks, §§25-10-3.1, 25-10-4.1,
25-10-5.

STORM-WATER.

Fire departments.

Emergency assistance to federal
agencies, §25-3-3.

STRICT LIABILITY.

Utility facility protection, §25-9-14.

STRIKES.

Firefighters, §25-5-12.

STUDENT LOANS.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

License discipline for default of loan,
restrictions, §26-4-60.

SUBPOENAS.

Arson.

Investigation of suspected arson,
§25-2-28.

Drugs and narcotics agency,
§26-4-29.

INDEX

SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

Confidentiality of information.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Confidentiality of patient information, §26-5-56.

Criminal charges.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs, §§26-5-1 to 26-5-23.

Administrative hearings.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.

Administrative procedure act.

Applicability, §26-5-16.

Appeals.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.

Character of services provided.

Classification of programs, §26-5-4.

Citation of provisions, §26-5-1.

Classification of programs, §26-5-4.

Minimum standards of quality and services, §26-5-5.

Confidentiality of records, names and communications, §26-5-17.

Definitions, §26-5-3.

Department.

Classification of programs, §26-5-4.

Defined, §26-5-3.

Drug abuse treatment and education act.

Short title, §26-5-1.

Drug dependent persons.

Defined, §26-5-3.

Records of persons treated or advised, §26-5-12.

Enforcement of provisions, §26-5-18.

Fee splitting.

Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

Hearings.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.

Denial, suspension or revocation of license.

Right to hearing, §26-5-14.

Schedule, §26-5-15.

Injunctions, §26-5-18.

Enforcement of provisions, §26-5-18.

Inspection of programs, §26-5-13.

Onsite inspection of narcotic treatment programs, §26-5-22.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE —Cont'd

Drug abuse treatment and education programs —Cont'd

Judicial review of actions.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.

Legislative intent, §26-5-2.

Licenses.

Applications, §26-5-8.

Proof of compliance with federal and state laws, §26-5-8.

Conditions for issuance, §26-5-11.

Denial, §§26-5-10, 26-5-14.

Grounds, §26-5-14.

Hearings.

Right to hearing, §26-5-14.

Schedule, §26-5-15.

Notice, §26-5-15.

Issuance, §26-5-10.

Conditions, §26-5-11.

Nontransferability, §26-5-11.

Provisional license, §§26-5-7, 26-5-9.

Renewal, §26-5-9.

Term, §26-5-9.

Required, §26-5-7.

Revocation or suspension, §§26-5-10, 26-5-14.

Notice and hearing, §26-5-15.

Transferability, §26-5-11.

Minimum standards of quality and services, §26-5-5.

Names of drug dependent persons.

Confidentiality, §26-5-17.

Nuisances.

Violation of provisions, §26-5-18.

Onsite inspection of narcotic treatment programs, §26-5-22.

Patient brokering prohibited, §26-5-80.

Penalty for violating part, §§26-5-19, 26-5-80.

Pregnant females.

Priority admissions, §26-5-20.

Priority admissions.

Pregnant females, §26-5-20.

Privileged communications of drug dependent persons, §26-5-17.

Purposes of provisions, §26-5-2.

Quality standards, §26-5-5.

Range of services provided.

Classification of programs, §26-5-4.

Records.

Confidentiality, §26-5-17.

Drug dependent persons treated or advised, §26-5-12.

Reporting requirements, §26-5-23.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE —Cont'd

Drug abuse treatment and education programs —Cont'd

- Rules and regulations, §26-5-6.
- Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-16.
- Promulgation, §26-5-6.
- Short title of act, §26-5-1.
- Standards of quality and services.
 - Minimum standards, §26-5-5.
- Violation of provisions.
 - Misdemeanor, §26-5-19.
 - Nuisances per se, §26-5-18.
 - Patient brokering, §26-5-80.
 - Penalty, §26-5-19.

Firefighters.

- Random testing for illegal drug use, §25-4-11.1.

Injunctions.

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs.
 - Violation of provisions, §26-5-18.
- Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.
 - Injunction of violations, §26-5-57.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act, §§26-5-40 to 26-5-62.

- Background checks, §26-5-61.
- Central registry of department of behavioral health and developmental disabilities.
 - Participation, §26-5-60.
- Citation of provisions, §26-5-40.
- Confidentiality of patient information, §26-5-56.
- Criminal offenses.
 - Violation as misdemeanor, §26-5-58.
- Definitions, §26-5-41.
- Department of community health.
 - Application review process committee, §26-5-47.
 - Enforcement of statutory provisions, §26-5-57.
 - Regulatory authority, §26-5-43.
 - Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-55.
 - Effect of existing rules and regulations, §26-5-62.
 - Standards for quality and service, §26-5-42.
- Disciplinary actions against licensees, §§26-5-53, 26-5-54.
- Discounted fees, restrictions, §26-5-49.
- Effect of existing rules and regulations, §26-5-62.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE —Cont'd
Narcotic treatment programs

enforcement act —Cont'd

- Enforcement of statutory provisions, §26-5-57.
- Enrollment period for license applications, §26-5-46.
- Financial incentives to potential patients, prohibited, §26-5-49.
- Governing bodies.
 - Defined, §26-5-41.
- Licenses.
 - Required to operate program, §26-5-44.
- Injunction of violations, §26-5-57.
- Inspection of premises, §26-5-52.
- Licenses.
 - Additional program, application by current licensee, §26-5-47.
 - Application, §26-5-45.
 - Application review process committee, §26-5-47.
 - Background checks, §26-5-61.
 - Change of location, §26-5-47.
 - Currently operating programs, §26-5-47.
 - Disciplinary actions, §§26-5-53, 26-5-54.
 - Information forum prior to start of open enrollment period, §26-5-46.
 - Issuance, §26-5-48.
 - Letter of intent to apply for license, §26-5-46.
 - Nontransferable, §26-5-47.
 - Number of programs licensee may operate, §26-5-48.
 - Waiver from restrictions, §26-5-48.
- Open enrollment period for applications, §26-5-46.
- Prerequisites, §26-5-48.
- Proof of compliance with federal and state laws, §§26-5-45, 26-5-48.
- Required to operate program, §26-5-44.
- Review of applications, §26-5-47.
- Submission of application, §26-5-45.
- Multiple enrollment of patient, avoidance.
 - Central registry of department of behavioral health and developmental disabilities, §26-5-60.
- Notice of proposed license suspension or revocation, §26-5-54.

INDEX

SUBSTANCE ABUSE —Cont'd

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act —Cont'd

Pregnant females, priority admissions, §26-5-59.

Records of licensees.

Confidentiality of patient information, §26-5-56.

Redaction of patient identifying information, §26-5-51.

Regional maximum allowable programs, §26-5-48.

Enumeration of regions, §26-5-48.

Rewards for patient referrals prohibited, §26-5-49.

Rules and regulations.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-55.

Department of community health, §26-5-43.

Effect of existing rules and regulations, §26-5-62.

Standards for quality and service, §26-5-42.

Title of provisions, §26-5-40.

Zoning laws, compliance, §26-5-50.

Overdoses.

Drug overdose.

Prescribing or administering opioid antagonists.

Immunity, §26-4-116.2.

Immunity.

Drug overdose.

Prescribing or administering opioid antagonists, §26-4-116.2.

Rules and regulations.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Promulgation, §26-5-6.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Applicability of administrative procedure act, §26-5-55.

Department of community health, §26-5-43.

Effect of existing rules and regulations, §26-5-62.

SUMMONS AND PROCESS.

Fire marshals.

Inquiries, §25-2-28.

SWINE.

Meat inspection, §§26-2-60 to 26-2-133.

SWINGS.

Amusement rides, §§25-15-58, 25-15-64.

Carnival rides, §25-15-94.

T

TABLES.

Blasting standards.

Formulas and tables, §25-8-4.

TAR.

Coal-tar coloring.

When drug deemed adulterated, §26-3-7.

Coal-tar hair dyes.

Caution on label, §26-3-11.

TAVERNS.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

TAXATION.

Eggs.

Exemption of producers from taxing and licensing, §26-2-264.

Exemptions from taxation.

Eggs.

Exemption of producers from taxing and licensing, §26-2-264.

TESTICULAR CANCER.

Fire departments.

Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

THEATERS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Fire safety standards.

Building presenting special hazards, §25-2-13.

THEME PARKS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine in places of public accommodation.

Health practitioners authorized to prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

THE PHARMACY AUDIT BILL OF RIGHTS, §26-4-118.

INDEX

THERMOMETERS.

Bulk farm tanks.

- Recording thermometers.
- Rules and regulations for installation and operation, §26-2-233.

THIAMINE.

Bread.

- Vitamins and ingredients in, §26-2-292.

Degerminated cornmeal.

- Vitamins and ingredients in, §26-2-293.

Flour.

- Vitamins and ingredients in, §26-2-291.

THIRD PARTIES.

Prescriptions.

- Third-party prescription programs, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

THIRD-PARTY PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM ACT.

General provisions, §§26-4-140 to 26-4-148.

Short title, §26-4-140.

THYROID.

Fire departments.

- Insurance coverage for members diagnosed with cancer, §25-3-23.

TIN.

Meat and meat products.

- Labeling of meat products in tins, §26-2-107.

TOBACCO.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

Fire safety standard and firefighter protection.

- Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to 25-14-11.

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE CALLING.

Nonresident pharmacies.

- Permit requirements, §26-4-114.1.

TORPEDOES.

Fireworks.

- Regulation generally, §§25-10-1 to 25-10-12.

TOWNHOUSES.

Smoke detectors.

- Where required, §25-2-40.

TOY CANES.

Fireworks not to include toy canes using paper caps, §25-10-1.

TRADEMARKS AND SERVICE MARKS.

Meat.

- Use of "Georgia" trademark, §26-2-115.

TRAFFIC-CONTROL SIGNAL MONITORING DEVICES.

Utility facility protection.

- Location of control devices, §25-9-14.

TRAFFIC LAWS.

Signs and signals.

- Utility facility protection.
- Location of traffic-control devices, §25-9-14.

TRANSFORMERS.

Boilers and pressure vessels.

- Pressure vessel used as external part of circuit breaker or transformer, §25-15-16.

TRAVELING MOTION PICTURE SHOWS.

Fires and fire prevention.

- Licensing, §25-2-20.

TREBLE DAMAGES.

Fire departments.

- Nomenclature.
- Willful violations, §25-13-9.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Raw dairy act.

- Testing of animals for diseases, §26-2-460.

TUMORS.

Drug, device or cosmetic advertisements.

Representation that drug or device has effect on tumors.

When advertisement deemed false, §26-3-13.

TYPHOID.

Drug, device or cosmetic advertisements.

Representation of having effect on typhoid.

When advertisements deemed false, §26-3-13.

U

UNCOOKED ANIMAL OFFAL.

Dairy sales.

Farm animals, §26-2-208.

Food deemed adulterated, §26-2-26.

UNDERGROUND FACILITY PROTECTION ACT.

General provisions, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Short title, §25-9-1.

UNDERGROUND GAS PIPES AND UTILITY FACILITIES.

Utility facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

Smoke detectors in dormitories, §25-2-40.

UNSANITARY CONDITIONS.

Cosmetics.

Adulteration, §26-3-11.

Drugs.

Adulteration, §26-3-7.

Processing plants.

Meat, poultry and dairy, §§26-2-204, 26-2-208.

URINALYSIS.

Firefighters.

Random testing for illegal drug use, §25-4-11.1.

UTILITIES.

Underground facility protection, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

UTILITY FACILITY PROTECTION, §§25-9-1 to 25-9-14.

Advisory committee, §25-9-14.

Bonds, surety, §25-9-14.

UTILITY FACILITY PROTECTION

—Cont'd

Citation of act, §25-9-1.

Definitions, §25-9-3.

Design locate requests.

Contents, §25-9-4.

Defined, §25-9-3.

Response by facility owner or operator, §25-9-4.

Effect of provisions, §§25-9-10, 25-9-11.

Emergencies.

Applicability of provisions in, §25-9-12.

Defined, §25-9-3.

Emergency 9-1-1 calls.

Defined, §25-9-3.

Strike of or damage to facilities carrying gas or hazardous liquid.

Excavator's duties, §25-9-3.

Enforcement, §25-9-14.

Excavation.

Design locate requests.

Request not used for excavation purposes, §25-9-4.

Excavator.

Duties, §25-9-8.

Extraordinary circumstances declarations.

Inability of owner or operator to designate location of facilities, §25-9-7.

Inability of UPC to transmit locate requests, §25-9-7.

Nonemergency excavations in area where owners or operators has declared extraordinary circumstances.

Appropriate notice requirement, applicability, §25-9-13.

Gas.

Emergency 9-1-1 calls.

Strike of or damage to facilities carrying gas or hazardous liquid.

Excavator's duties, §25-9-3.

Georgia underground facility protection act.

Citation of act, §25-9-1.

Hazardous liquids.

Emergency 9-1-1 calls.

Strike of or damage to facilities carrying gas or hazardous liquid.

Excavator's duties, §25-9-3.

UTILITY FACILITY PROTECTION

—Cont'd

Inability to locate facilities.

- Excavator unable to locate.
- Collaboration with owner or operator to precisely locate, §25-9-8.

Information concerning location of underground facilities.

- Accuracy required, §25-9-9.
- Liability for inaccurate information, §25-9-9.

Intent of provisions, §25-9-2.

Large project rules.

- Development required, §25-9-7.

Locate requests, §25-9-6.

- Defined, §25-9-3.
- Duties of facility owner or operator following, §25-9-7.

Notice.

- Appropriate notice included with locate request, §25-9-6.
- Definition of appropriate notice, §25-9-3.
- Emergency excavations.
- Applicability of provisions, §25-9-12.
- Nonemergency excavations in area where owners or operators has declared extraordinary circumstances.
- Applicability of appropriate notice requirement, §25-9-13.

Ordinances imposing fines or additional marking/locating requirements, prohibited, §25-9-11.1.

Owners or operators of facilities.

- Duties, §§25-9-5, 25-9-7.
- Response to design locate requests, §25-9-4.

Penalties for violations, §25-9-14.

Permanent markers.

- Accurate placement, §25-9-5.
- Defined, §25-9-3.
- Water and sewer facilities, §25-9-5.

Prerequisites to blasting or excavating, §25-9-6.

Purpose of provisions, §25-9-2.

Rights, powers, etc., of state, county or municipalities.

- Effect of provisions on, §25-9-11.

Rights, powers, etc., of utilities.

- Effect of provisions on, §25-9-10.

Settlement of liability, §25-9-14.

UTILITY FACILITY PROTECTION

—Cont'd

Title of act, §25-9-1.

Tolerance zone.

- Defined, §25-9-3.
- Excavating or blasting within.
- Duty of reasonable care, §25-9-8.

Training in lieu of penalties, §25-9-14.

Utilities protection center.

- Defined, §25-9-3.
- Information to be provided to, §25-9-7.
- List of facilities, §25-9-5.
- Participation in and cooperation by facility owners and operators, §25-9-5.
- Transportation department.
- Cooperation between department and UPC, §25-9-10.1.

White lining.

- Defined, §25-9-3.
- Marking location for blasting or excavation.
- Local ordinances imposing additional requirements, prohibited, §25-9-11.1.
- Requirements for marking by white lining, §25-9-6.

V

VACCINATIONS.

COVID-19.

- Pharmacy technicians administering adult vaccines, §26-4-52.

Pharmacy technicians administering adult vaccines, §26-4-52.

VARIANCES.

Amusement rides, §25-15-63.

Carnival rides, §25-15-93.

Fire protection and safety.

- Fire safety standards, §25-2-12.

Food.

- Adulteration and misbranding.
- Waiver or variance to rule causing substantial hardship, §26-2-34.

VENDING MACHINES.

Amusement ride safety.

- Chapter inapplicable to single-passenger coin-operated rides, §25-15-64.

INDEX

VENDING MACHINES —Cont'd

Carnival ride safety.

Chapter inapplicable to
single-passenger coin-operated
rides, §25-15-94.

Drugs sold in, §26-4-89.

Food service establishments

generally, §§26-2-370 to 26-2-379.

VENUE.

Drug abuse treatment and education programs.

Patient brokering, actions for
violations, §26-5-80.

Pharmacy, state board.

Venue of actions involving members,
§26-4-20.

Substance abuse.

Drug abuse treatment and education
programs.

Patient brokering, actions for
violations, §26-5-80.

VETERINARIANS.

Dispensing drugs, §26-4-130.

Poisons.

Dispensing poisons in not unusual
quantities upon prescriptions,
§26-4-162.

VILLAGES.

Fire departments.

General provisions, §§25-3-1 to
25-3-27.

Mutual aid resource pacts, §§25-6-1 to
25-6-11.

Firefighters.

General provisions, §§25-4-1 to
25-4-12.

Labor and employment relations,
§§25-5-1 to 25-5-14.

VITAMINS.

Bread and flour.

Certain vitamins required in bread,
§26-2-292.

Degerminated corn meal, §26-2-293.

Degerminated hominy grits, §26-2-293.

Flour, §26-2-291.

W

WAIVER.

Food.

Adulteration and misbranding.

Waiver or variance to rule causing
substantial hardship, §26-2-34.

WAREHOUSES.

Drugs and cosmetics.

Inspections, §26-3-17.

Fire hazards.

Regulation, §25-2-19.

WARRANTS.

Inspection warrants.

Fire investigations, §25-2-22.1.

WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS.

Fireworks.

Restrictions on use of consumer
fireworks, §25-10-2.

WATER-BASED FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

Defined, §25-11-2.

WATER HEATERS, §§25-15-10 to 25-15-31.

WATER LANTERNS.

Use of certain devices using fire for
propulsion, prohibitions,
§25-10-10.

WEAPONS.

State fire marshal.

Authority to carry, §25-2-9.

WEATHER.

Blasting records, §25-8-8.

WEIGHT GAIN.

Commonsense consumption act.

Nonliability of food manufacturers,
distributors, sellers, packers, etc.,
§§26-2-430 to 26-2-436.

WELDING.

Gases.

Hazardous materials, §25-2-16.

WHOLESALEERS.

Food, drug and cosmetic act.

Definition of wholesaler, §26-2-260.

Pharmacists and pharmacies.

Wholesale distributors and drug
distributors, §§26-4-113, 26-4-115,
26-4-115.1.

Defined, §26-4-5.

WILDFIRES.

Cigarette fire safety, §§25-14-1 to
25-14-11.

WISH LANTERNS.

Use of certain devices using fire for
propulsion, prohibitions,
§25-10-10.

INDEX

WITNESSES.

Meat inspection.

Access of commissioner to witnesses,
§26-2-81.

WOMEN.

Drug dependent pregnant females.

Treatment and education programs.
Priority admissions, §26-5-20.

Y

YEAST.

Bread.

Defined, §26-2-290.
Vitamins and ingredients, §26-2-292.

YOLKS.

Classification of eggs, §26-2-261.

YOUTH ATHLETICS.

Epinephrine.

Storage of auto-injectable epinephrine
in places of public accommodation.
Health practitioners authorized to
prescribe for, §26-4-116.1.

Z

ZONING.

Amusement rides.

Local zoning ordinances, §25-15-69.
Municipal regulation, §25-15-101.

Narcotic treatment programs enforcement act.

Compliance with zoning laws,
§26-5-50.

Substance abuse.

Narcotic treatment programs
enforcement act.
Compliance with zoning laws,
§26-5-50.

