

PARENTAL KIDNAPPING AMENDMENTS

2023 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Jon Hawkins

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill enacts provisions relating to parental kidnapping.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms; and
- ▶ makes it a crime for a parent without visitation rights or custody to interfere with custody of a child.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

76-5-301.2, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **76-5-301.2** is enacted to read:

76-5-301.2. Parental kidnapping.

(1) (a) As used in this section:

(i) "Child" means an individual under 18 years old.



28 (ii) "Custody" means court-ordered physical custody of a child entered by a court of
29 competent jurisdiction.

30 (iii) "Parent" means an individual recognized as a biological or adoptive parent.

31 (iv) "Visitation" means court-ordered parent-time or visitation entered by a court of
32 competent jurisdiction.

33 (b) Terms defined in Section [76-1-101.5](#) apply to this section.

34 (2) A parent commits parental kidnapping if the parent:

35 (a) is not entitled to custody or visitation of a child;

36 (b) takes, entices, conceals, detains, or withholds the child from an individual entitled
37 to custody of the child; and

38 (c) intends to interfere with the custody of the child.

39 (3) (a) A violation of Subsection (2) is a third degree felony.

40 (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(a), a violation of Subsection (2) is a second degree
41 felony if, during the course of parental kidnapping, the parent removes, causes the removal, or
42 directs the removal of the child from the state.

43 (4) In addition to the affirmative defenses described in Section [76-5-305](#), it is an
44 affirmative defense to the crime of parental kidnapping that:

45 (a) the parent acted under a reasonable belief that the action described in Subsection
46 (2)(b) was:

47 (i) necessary to protect the child from imminent serious bodily injury, or death;

48 (ii) authorized by law; or

49 (iii) taken with the consent of:

50 (A) the individual entitled to custody of the child; or

51 (B) a custodian, guardian, caretaker, or other individual lawfully acting in place of the
52 individual entitled to custody of the child; or

53 (b) (i) the parent acted under a reasonable belief that the action described in Subsection
54 (2)(b) was necessary to protect the child from abuse, including sexual abuse; and

55 (ii) before taking the action described in Subsection (2)(b), the parent reports to law
56 enforcement the parent's intention to engage in the action and the basis for the parent's belief
57 described in Subsection (4)(b)(i).