

76-2-402 Force in defense of person -- Forcible felony defined.

- (1)
 - (a) A person is justified in threatening or using force against another when and to the extent that the person reasonably believes that force or a threat of force is necessary to defend the person or a third person against another person's imminent use of unlawful force.
 - (b) A person is justified in using force intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily injury only if the person reasonably believes that force is necessary to prevent death or serious bodily injury to the person or a third person as a result of another person's imminent use of unlawful force, or to prevent the commission of a forcible felony.
- (2)
 - (a) A person is not justified in using force under the circumstances specified in Subsection (1) if the person:
 - (i) initially provokes the use of force against the person with the intent to use force as an excuse to inflict bodily harm upon the assailant;
 - (ii) is attempting to commit, committing, or fleeing after the commission or attempted commission of a felony; or
 - (iii) was the aggressor or was engaged in a combat by agreement, unless the person withdraws from the encounter and effectively communicates to the other person his intent to do so and, notwithstanding, the other person continues or threatens to continue the use of unlawful force.
 - (b) For purposes of Subsection (2)(a)(iii) the following do not, by themselves, constitute "combat by agreement":
 - (i) voluntarily entering into or remaining in an ongoing relationship; or
 - (ii) entering or remaining in a place where one has a legal right to be.
- (3) A person does not have a duty to retreat from the force or threatened force described in Subsection (1) in a place where that person has lawfully entered or remained, except as provided in Subsection (2)(a)(iii).
- (4)
 - (a) For purposes of this section, a forcible felony includes aggravated assault, mayhem, aggravated murder, murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, and aggravated kidnapping, rape, forcible sodomy, rape of a child, object rape, object rape of a child, sexual abuse of a child, aggravated sexual abuse of a child, and aggravated sexual assault as defined in Title 76, Chapter 5, Offenses Against the Person, and arson, robbery, and burglary as defined in Title 76, Chapter 6, Offenses Against Property.
 - (b) Any other felony offense which involves the use of force or violence against a person so as to create a substantial danger of death or serious bodily injury also constitutes a forcible felony.
 - (c) Burglary of a vehicle, defined in Section 76-6-204, does not constitute a forcible felony except when the vehicle is occupied at the time unlawful entry is made or attempted.
- (5) In determining imminence or reasonableness under Subsection (1), the trier of fact may consider, but is not limited to, any of the following factors:
 - (a) the nature of the danger;
 - (b) the immediacy of the danger;
 - (c) the probability that the unlawful force would result in death or serious bodily injury;
 - (d) the other's prior violent acts or violent propensities; and
 - (e) any patterns of abuse or violence in the parties' relationship.

Amended by Chapter 324, 2010 General Session
Amended by Chapter 361, 2010 General Session

