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Unlawful Tracking Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Doug Owens

Senate Sponsor:

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LONG TITLE

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General Description:

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This bill addresses the unlawful tracking of an individual.

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Highlighted Provisions:

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This bill:

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- ▶ amends the offense of unlawful installation of a tracking device by:
 - renaming the offense to unlawful use of a tracking device or tracking application;
 - broadening the offense to include placing a tracking device on certain personal property and using a tracking application to track another individual's movements;
 - creating presumptions for the revocation of consent concerning a tracking device or tracking application;
 - clarifying that an actor commits the offense if the victim had previously given consent for the actor to use the tracking device or tracking application and later revoked that consent, and the actor continued to use the tracking device or tracking application;
- and
 - requiring statutory damages in a successful civil action brought by the victim if the victim elects to receive the statutory damages instead of compensatory damages; and
 - ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

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Money Appropriated in this Bill:

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None

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Other Special Clauses:

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None

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Utah Code Sections Affected:

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AMENDS:

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76-12-305, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 173

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

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Section 1. Section **76-12-305** is amended to read:

31 **76-12-305 . Unlawful use of a tracking device or tracking application.**

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

33 (i) "Minor" means an individual who is younger than 18 years old.

34 [(i)] (ii) "Motor vehicle" means the same as that term is defined in Subsection
35 41-12a-103(4).

36 [(ii)] (iii) "Private investigator" means an individual who is:

37 (A) licensed as a private investigator under Title 53, Chapter 9, Private
38 Investigator Regulation Act; and

39 (B) acting in the capacity of a private investigator.

40 [(iii)] (iv) "Protective order" means a protective order, stalking injunction, or
41 restraining order issued by a court of any jurisdiction.

42 (v)(A) "Tangible personal property" means a physical asset or object that can be
43 seen, touched, and moved.

44 (B) "Tangible personal property" does not include a motor vehicle.

45 (vi) "Tracking application" means a software program that can be used to track or
46 identify the location or movement of an individual.

47 [(iv)] (vii)(A) "Tracking device" means a device used for the primary purpose of
48 revealing the device's location or movement by the transmission or recording
49 of an electronic signal.

50 (B) "Tracking device" does not include location technology installed on a motor
51 vehicle by the motor vehicle manufacturer or a commercial motor vehicle
52 dealer that transmits electronic signals for the purpose of data collection, if the
53 data collection is anonymized.

54 (viii) "Vulnerable adult" means the same as that term is defined in Section 76-5-111.

55 (b) Terms defined in Sections 76-1-101.5, 76-12-101, and 76-12-301 apply to this
56 section.

57 (2) [Except as provided in Subsektion (4), an-] An actor commits unlawful [installation] use
58 of a tracking device or tracking application if[the aetor knowingly] :

59 (a)(i) [-] the actor knowingly installs or places, or directs another to install or place, a
60 tracking device on or in a motor vehicle owned or leased by another [person,]
61 individual; and

62 (ii) the actor:

63 (A) [without the] did not receive permission [of] from the owner or lessee of the
64 motor vehicle[-] to install or place the tracking device; or

(B) continued to use the tracking device to track the owner's or lessee's movement after the owner or lessee revoked the owner's or lessee's permission for the actor to use the tracking device;

(b)(i) the actor knowingly places, or directs another to place, a tracking device:

(A) on an individual's person;

(B) on or in an individual's tangible personal property; or

(C) on or in tangible personal property under the physical control of an individual; and

(ii) the actor:

(A) did not receive permission from the individual to place the tracking device; or

(B) continued to use the tracking device to track the individual's movement after the individual revoked the individual's permission for the actor to use the tracking device; or

(c)(i) the actor knowingly uses a tracking application installed or otherwise used on an electronic or other device in the possession or control of an individual to track the individual's movement; and

(ii) the actor:

(A) did not receive permission from the individual to use the tracking application; or

(B) continued to use the tracking application to track the individual's movement after the individual revoked the individual's permission for the actor to use the tracking application.

A violation of Subsection (2) is a class A misdemeanor.

[An actor does not commit a violation of Subsection (2) if the actor] Subject to Subsection (7), Subsection (2)(a) does not apply to an individual who:

(a)(i) is a licensed private investigator installing or placing the tracking device for a legitimate business purpose; and

(ii) installs or places the tracking device on a motor vehicle that is not:

(A) owned or leased by an individual under the protection of a protective order; or

(B) operated by an individual under the protection of a protective order who resides with, or is an immediate family member of, the owner or lessee of the motor vehicle; or

(b) installs or places the tracking device on a motor vehicle pursuant to a court order.

This section does not apply to:

99 (a) [-]a peace officer, acting in the peace officer's official capacity, who installs or places
100 a tracking device, or causes another individual to install or place a tracking device, on
101 an individual's person, on or in an individual's tangible personal property, on or in
102 tangible personal property under the physical control of an individual, or on or in a
103 motor vehicle owned or leased by an individual in the course of a criminal
104 investigation or pursuant to a court order[-] ;

105 (b) a parent or legal guardian of a minor:

106 (i)(A) who installs or places a tracking device on the minor's person, on or in the
107 minor's tangible personal property, on or in tangible personal property under
108 the physical control of the minor, or on or in a motor vehicle owned or leased
109 by the minor; or

110 (B) who uses a tracking application installed or otherwise used on an electronic or
111 other device in the possession or control of the minor to track the minor's
112 movement; and

113 (ii) who has received permission from any other parent or legal guardian of the minor
114 to install or place the tracking device or use the tracking application;

115 (c) a caregiver of a vulnerable adult:

116 (i)(A) who installs or places a tracking device on the vulnerable adult's person, on
117 or in the vulnerable adult's tangible personal property, on or in tangible
118 personal property under the physical control of the vulnerable adult, or on or in
119 a motor vehicle owned or leased by the vulnerable adult; or

120 (B) who uses a tracking application installed or otherwise used on an electronic or
121 other device in the possession or control of the vulnerable adult to track the
122 vulnerable adult's movement; and

123 (ii) who has received certification from the vulnerable adult's treating physician that
124 the installation or placement of the tracking device or use of the tracking
125 application is necessary to ensure the safety of the vulnerable adult; or

126 (d) an individual who installs, places, or uses a tracking application at the direction of a
127 court order.

128 (6) Under Subsection (2), an individual's permission to permit another individual to place a
129 tracking device or use a tracking application is presumed to be revoked if:

130 (a) the consenting individual and the individual to whom consent was given are lawfully
131 married and one of the individuals files a petition for the dissolution of the marriage;
132 or

133 (b) a protective order is sought by the consenting individual or the individual to whom
134 consent was given or a protective order is issued that covers the interaction between
135 the two individuals.

136 [(6)] (7)(a) Before installing or placing a tracking device on a motor vehicle under
137 Subsection (4), a private investigator shall request confirmation from a state entity
138 with access to updated protective order records, that:

139 [(a)] (i) the owner or lessee of the vehicle is not under the protection of a protective
140 order; and

141 [(b)] (ii) [an] any individual who resides with, or is an immediate family member of,
142 the owner or lessee of the motor vehicle is not under the protection of a protective
143 order.

144 [(7)] (b) On request from a licensed private investigator, a state entity, including a law
145 enforcement agency, with access to protective order records shall confirm or deny the
146 existence of a protective order, disclosing only whether an individual named by the
147 private investigator is under the protection of a protective order issued in any
148 jurisdiction.

149 [(8)] (c) A private investigator may not disclose the information obtained under
150 Subsection [(7)] (7)(b) to any person, except as permitted by law.

151 [(9)] (d) On request from the Bureau of Criminal Identification, a private investigator
152 who installs or places a tracking device on a motor vehicle shall disclose the purpose
153 of the tracking device to the Bureau of Criminal Identification.

154 [(10)] (8)[(a) A person] An individual, or the heirs of a deceased [person] individual, who
155 has been injured by a violation of [this section] Subsection (2) may bring an action
156 against the actor who committed the violation.

157 [(b) If in the action described in Subsection (10)(a) the court finds the defendant is
158 violating or has violated any of the provisions of this section, the court shall enjoin
159 the defendant from a continued violation.]

160 [(e) It is not necessary that actual damages to the plaintiff be alleged or proved, but if
161 damages are alleged and proved, the plaintiff in the action is entitled to recover from
162 the defendant the actual damages sustained, if any, in addition to injunctive relief.]

163 [(d) A finding that the defendant is in violation of this section entitles the plaintiff to an
164 award of reasonable attorney fees.]

165 [(e) Exemplary damages may be awarded when the violation is found to be malicious.]

166 (9) If in the action described in Subsection (8) the court finds by a preponderance of the

167 evidence that the defendant has committed a violation of Subsection (2), the court shall:
168 (a) enjoin the defendant from a continued violation; and
169 (b) if the plaintiff establishes that the violation has injured the plaintiff, award to the
170 plaintiff, subject to Subsection (10)(a):
171 (i) reasonable attorney fees; and
172 (ii)(A) compensatory damages; or
173 (B) statutory damages of \$50 a day for each day the defendant violates a provision
174 of this section, or \$5,000, whichever is greater.

175 (10)(a) A plaintiff may elect at any time before final judgment is entered by the court, to
176 recover, statutory damages under Subsection (9)(b)(ii)(B) instead of compensatory
177 damages.

178 (b) In addition to the damages described in Subsection (9), a court may award punitive
179 damages in accordance with Section 78B-8-201.

180 (11)(a) If an actor at trial is found not guilty of violating this section, the not guilty
181 verdict does not preclude a court from finding that the actor is liable under
182 Subsection (9).

183 (b) If restitution was ordered in the criminal action, the amount ordered shall be
184 deducted from any damages awarded under Subsection (9)(b).

185 **Section 2. Effective Date.**

186 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.