

**PENALTY ENHANCEMENT AMENDMENTS**

2021 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Todd D. Weiler**

House Sponsor: Brady Brammer

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies provisions relating to convictions that can be used to enhance penalties for certain controlled substances offenses.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

▶ provides that in order to be used as a penalty enhancement for certain controlled substances offenses, a prior offense must be committed within seven years before the date of the current offense; and

▶ makes technical changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**58-37-8**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2020, Chapters 12, 117, 131, 191, and 354

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

Section 1. Section **58-37-8** is amended to read:

**58-37-8. Prohibited acts -- Penalties.**



28 (1) Prohibited acts A -- Penalties and reporting:

29 (a) Except as authorized by this chapter, it is unlawful for a person to knowingly and  
30 intentionally:

31 (i) produce, manufacture, or dispense, or to possess with intent to produce,  
32 manufacture, or dispense, a controlled or counterfeit substance;

33 (ii) distribute a controlled or counterfeit substance, or to agree, consent, offer, or  
34 arrange to distribute a controlled or counterfeit substance;

35 (iii) possess a controlled or counterfeit substance with intent to distribute; or

36 (iv) engage in a continuing criminal enterprise where:

37 (A) the person participates, directs, or engages in conduct that results in a violation of  
38 Chapter 37, Utah Controlled Substances Act, Chapter 37a, Utah Drug Paraphernalia Act,  
39 Chapter 37b, Imitation Controlled Substances Act, Chapter 37c, Utah Controlled Substance  
40 Precursor Act, or Chapter 37d, Clandestine Drug Lab Act, that is a felony; and

41 (B) the violation is a part of a continuing series of two or more violations of Chapter  
42 37, Utah Controlled Substances Act, Chapter 37a, Utah Drug Paraphernalia Act, Chapter 37b,  
43 Imitation Controlled Substances Act, Chapter 37c, Utah Controlled Substance Precursor Act,  
44 or Chapter 37d, Clandestine Drug Lab Act, on separate occasions that are undertaken in concert  
45 with five or more persons with respect to whom the person occupies a position of organizer,  
46 supervisor, or any other position of management.

47 (b) A person convicted of violating Subsection (1)(a) with respect to:

48 (i) a substance or a counterfeit of a substance classified in Schedule I or II, a controlled  
49 substance analog, or gammahydroxybutyric acid as listed in Schedule III is guilty of a second  
50 degree felony, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 15 years, and upon a second or  
51 subsequent conviction is guilty of a first degree felony;

52 (ii) a substance or a counterfeit of a substance classified in Schedule III or IV, or  
53 marijuana, or a substance listed in Section [58-37-4.2](#) is guilty of a third degree felony, and  
54 upon a second or subsequent conviction is guilty of a second degree felony; or

55 (iii) a substance or a counterfeit of a substance classified in Schedule V is guilty of a  
56 class A misdemeanor and upon a second or subsequent conviction is guilty of a third degree  
57 felony.

58 (c) A person who has been convicted of a violation of Subsection (1)(a)(ii) or (iii) may

59 be sentenced to imprisonment for an indeterminate term as provided by law, but if the trier of  
60 fact finds a firearm as defined in Section 76-10-501 was used, carried, or possessed on the  
61 person or in the person's immediate possession during the commission or in furtherance of the  
62 offense, the court shall additionally sentence the person convicted for a term of one year to run  
63 consecutively and not concurrently; and the court may additionally sentence the person  
64 convicted for an indeterminate term not to exceed five years to run consecutively and not  
65 concurrently.

66 (d) (i) A person convicted of violating Subsection (1)(a)(iv) is guilty of a first degree  
67 felony punishable by imprisonment for an indeterminate term of not less than:

68 (A) seven years and which may be for life; or

69 (B) 15 years and which may be for life if the trier of fact determined that the defendant  
70 knew or reasonably should have known that any subordinate under Subsection (1)(a)(iv)(B)  
71 was under 18 years [~~of age~~] old.

72 (ii) Imposition or execution of the sentence may not be suspended, and the person is  
73 not eligible for probation.

74 (iii) Subsection (1)(d)(i)(B) does not apply to any defendant who, at the time of the  
75 offense, was under 18 years [~~of age~~] old.

76 (e) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall report to the Division of  
77 Occupational and Professional Licensing the name, case number, date of conviction, and if  
78 known, the date of birth of each person convicted of violating Subsection (1)(a).

79 (2) Prohibited acts B -- Penalties and reporting:

80 (a) It is unlawful:

81 (i) for a person knowingly and intentionally to possess or use a controlled substance  
82 analog or a controlled substance, unless it was obtained under a valid prescription or order,  
83 directly from a practitioner while acting in the course of the person's professional practice, or as  
84 otherwise authorized by this chapter;

85 (ii) for an owner, tenant, licensee, or person in control of a building, room, tenement,  
86 vehicle, boat, aircraft, or other place knowingly and intentionally to permit them to be occupied  
87 by persons unlawfully possessing, using, or distributing controlled substances in any of those  
88 locations; or

89 (iii) for a person knowingly and intentionally to possess an altered or forged

90 prescription or written order for a controlled substance.

91 (b) A person convicted of violating Subsection (2)(a)(i) with respect to:

92 (i) marijuana, if the amount is 100 pounds or more, is guilty of a second degree felony;

93 or

94 (ii) a substance classified in Schedule I or II, or a controlled substance analog, is guilty

95 of a class A misdemeanor on a first or second conviction, and on a third or subsequent

96 conviction if each prior offense was committed within seven years before ~~[the date of the~~

97 ~~current conviction or]~~ the date of the offense upon which the current conviction is based is

98 guilty of a third degree felony.

99 (c) Upon a person's conviction of a violation of this Subsection (2) subsequent to a

100 conviction under Subsection (1)(a), that person shall be sentenced to a one degree greater

101 penalty than provided in this Subsection (2).

102 (d) A person who violates Subsection (2)(a)(i) with respect to all other controlled

103 substances not included in Subsection (2)(b)(i) or (ii), including a substance listed in Section

104 58-37-4.2, or marijuana, is guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

105 (i) Upon a third conviction the person is guilty of a class A misdemeanor, if each prior

106 offense was committed within seven years before ~~[the date of the current conviction or]~~ the

107 date of the offense upon which the current conviction is based.

108 (ii) Upon a fourth or subsequent conviction the person is guilty of a third degree felony

109 if each prior offense was committed within seven years ~~[of the date of the current conviction~~

110 ~~or]~~ before the date of the offense upon which the current conviction is based.

111 (e) A person convicted of violating Subsection (2)(a)(i) while inside the exterior

112 boundaries of property occupied by a correctional facility as defined in Section 64-13-1 or a

113 public jail or other place of confinement shall be sentenced to a penalty one degree greater than

114 provided in Subsection (2)(b), and if the conviction is with respect to controlled substances as

115 listed in:

116 (i) Subsection (2)(b), the person may be sentenced to imprisonment for an

117 indeterminate term as provided by law, and:

118 (A) the court shall additionally sentence the person convicted to a term of one year to

119 run consecutively and not concurrently; and

120 (B) the court may additionally sentence the person convicted for an indeterminate term

121 not to exceed five years to run consecutively and not concurrently; and

122 (ii) Subsection (2)(d), the person may be sentenced to imprisonment for an  
123 indeterminate term as provided by law, and the court shall additionally sentence the person  
124 convicted to a term of six months to run consecutively and not concurrently.

125 (f) A person convicted of violating Subsection (2)(a)(ii) or (iii) is:

126 (i) on a first conviction, guilty of a class B misdemeanor;

127 (ii) on a second conviction, guilty of a class A misdemeanor; and

128 (iii) on a third or subsequent conviction, guilty of a third degree felony.

129 (g) A person is subject to the penalties under Subsection (2)(h) who, in an offense not  
130 amounting to a violation of Section 76-5-207:

131 (i) violates Subsection (2)(a)(i) by knowingly and intentionally having in the person's  
132 body any measurable amount of a controlled substance, except for  
133 11-nor-9-carboxy-tetrahydrocannabinol; and

134 (ii) (A) if the controlled substance is not marijuana, operates a motor vehicle as defined  
135 in Section 76-5-207 in a negligent manner, causing serious bodily injury as defined in Section  
136 76-1-601 or the death of another; or

137 (B) if the controlled substance is marijuana, operates a motor vehicle as defined in  
138 Section 76-5-207 in a criminally negligent manner, causing serious bodily injury as defined in  
139 Section 76-1-601 or the death of another.

140 (h) A person who violates Subsection (2)(g) by having in the person's body:

141 (i) a controlled substance classified under Schedule I, other than those described in  
142 Subsection (2)(h)(ii), or a controlled substance classified under Schedule II is guilty of a second  
143 degree felony;

144 (ii) except as provided in Subsection (2)(g)(ii)(B), marijuana, tetrahydrocannabinols, or  
145 equivalents described in Subsection 58-37-4(2)(a)(iii)(S) or (AA), or a substance listed in  
146 Section 58-37-4.2 is guilty of a third degree felony; or

147 (iii) a controlled substance classified under Schedules III, IV, or V is guilty of a class A  
148 misdemeanor.

149 (i) A person is guilty of a separate offense for each victim suffering serious bodily  
150 injury or death as a result of the person's negligent driving in violation of Subsection(2)(g)  
151 whether or not the injuries arise from the same episode of driving.

152 (j) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall report to the Division of Occupational  
153 and Professional Licensing the name, case number, date of conviction, and if known, the date  
154 of birth of each person convicted of violating Subsection (2)(a).

155 (3) Prohibited acts C -- Penalties:

156 (a) It is unlawful for a person knowingly and intentionally:

157 (i) to use in the course of the manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance a  
158 license number which is fictitious, revoked, suspended, or issued to another person or, for the  
159 purpose of obtaining a controlled substance, to assume the title of, or represent oneself to be, a  
160 manufacturer, wholesaler, apothecary, physician, dentist, veterinarian, or other authorized  
161 person;

162 (ii) to acquire or obtain possession of, to procure or attempt to procure the  
163 administration of, to obtain a prescription for, to prescribe or dispense to a person known to be  
164 attempting to acquire or obtain possession of, or to procure the administration of a controlled  
165 substance by misrepresentation or failure by the person to disclose receiving a controlled  
166 substance from another source, fraud, forgery, deception, subterfuge, alteration of a  
167 prescription or written order for a controlled substance, or the use of a false name or address;

168 (iii) to make a false or forged prescription or written order for a controlled substance,  
169 or to utter the same, or to alter a prescription or written order issued or written under the terms  
170 of this chapter; or

171 (iv) to make, distribute, or possess a punch, die, plate, stone, or other thing designed to  
172 print, imprint, or reproduce the trademark, trade name, or other identifying mark, imprint, or  
173 device of another or any likeness of any of the foregoing upon any drug or container or labeling  
174 so as to render a drug a counterfeit controlled substance.

175 (b) (i) A first or second conviction under Subsection (3)(a)(i), (ii), or (iii) is a class A  
176 misdemeanor.

177 (ii) A third or subsequent conviction under Subsection (3)(a)(i), (ii), or (iii) is a third  
178 degree felony.

179 (c) A violation of Subsection (3)(a)(iv) is a third degree felony.

180 (4) Prohibited acts D -- Penalties:

181 (a) Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, a person not authorized under this  
182 chapter who commits any act that is unlawful under Subsection (1)(a) or Section 58-37b-4 is

183 upon conviction subject to the penalties and classifications under this Subsection (4) if the trier  
184 of fact finds the act is committed:

185 (i) in a public or private elementary or secondary school or on the grounds of any of  
186 those schools during the hours of 6 a.m. through 10 p.m.;

187 (ii) in a public or private vocational school or postsecondary institution or on the  
188 grounds of any of those schools or institutions during the hours of 6 a.m. through 10 p.m.;

189 (iii) in or on the grounds of a preschool or child-care facility during the preschool's or  
190 facility's hours of operation;

191 (iv) in a public park, amusement park, arcade, or recreation center when the public or  
192 amusement park, arcade, or recreation center is open to the public;

193 (v) in or on the grounds of a house of worship as defined in Section 76-10-501;

194 (vi) in or on the grounds of a library when the library is open to the public;

195 (vii) within an area that is within 100 feet of any structure, facility, or grounds included  
196 in Subsections (4)(a)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), and (vi);

197 (viii) in the presence of a person younger than 18 years of age, regardless of where the  
198 act occurs; or

199 (ix) for the purpose of facilitating, arranging, or causing the transport, delivery, or  
200 distribution of a substance in violation of this section to an inmate or on the grounds of a  
201 correctional facility as defined in Section 76-8-311.3.

202 (b) (i) A person convicted under this Subsection (4) is guilty of a first degree felony  
203 and shall be imprisoned for a term of not less than five years if the penalty that would  
204 otherwise have been established but for this Subsection (4) would have been a first degree  
205 felony.

206 (ii) Imposition or execution of the sentence may not be suspended, and the person is  
207 not eligible for probation.

208 (c) If the classification that would otherwise have been established would have been  
209 less than a first degree felony but for this Subsection (4), a person convicted under this  
210 Subsection (4) is guilty of one degree more than the maximum penalty prescribed for that  
211 offense. This Subsection (4)(c) does not apply to a violation of Subsection (2)(g).

212 (d) (i) If the violation is of Subsection (4)(a)(ix):

213 (A) the person may be sentenced to imprisonment for an indeterminate term as

214 provided by law, and the court shall additionally sentence the person convicted for a term of  
215 one year to run consecutively and not concurrently; and

216 (B) the court may additionally sentence the person convicted for an indeterminate term  
217 not to exceed five years to run consecutively and not concurrently; and

218 (ii) the penalties under this Subsection (4)(d) apply also to a person who, acting with  
219 the mental state required for the commission of an offense, directly or indirectly solicits,  
220 requests, commands, coerces, encourages, or intentionally aids another person to commit a  
221 violation of Subsection (4)(a)(ix).

222 (e) It is not a defense to a prosecution under this Subsection (4) that:

223 (i) the actor mistakenly believed the individual to be 18 years [~~of age~~] old or older at  
224 the time of the offense or was unaware of the individual's true age; or

225 (ii) the actor mistakenly believed that the location where the act occurred was not as  
226 described in Subsection (4)(a) or was unaware that the location where the act occurred was as  
227 described in Subsection (4)(a).

228 (5) A violation of this chapter for which no penalty is specified is a class B  
229 misdemeanor.

230 (6) (a) For purposes of penalty enhancement under Subsections (1) and (2), a plea of  
231 guilty or no contest to a violation or attempted violation of this section or a plea which is held  
232 in abeyance under Title 77, Chapter 2a, Pleas in Abeyance, is the equivalent of a conviction,  
233 even if the charge has been subsequently reduced or dismissed in accordance with the plea in  
234 abeyance agreement.

235 (b) A prior conviction used for a penalty enhancement under Subsection (2) shall be a  
236 conviction that is:

237 (i) from a separate criminal episode than the current charge; and

238 (ii) from a conviction that is separate from any other conviction used to enhance the  
239 current charge.

240 (7) A person may be charged and sentenced for a violation of this section,  
241 notwithstanding a charge and sentence for a violation of any other section of this chapter.

242 (8) (a) A penalty imposed for violation of this section is in addition to, and not in lieu  
243 of, a civil or administrative penalty or sanction authorized by law.

244 (b) When a violation of this chapter violates a federal law or the law of another state,



245 conviction or acquittal under federal law or the law of another state for the same act is a bar to  
246 prosecution in this state.

247 (9) In any prosecution for a violation of this chapter, evidence or proof that shows a  
248 person or persons produced, manufactured, possessed, distributed, or dispensed a controlled  
249 substance or substances, is prima facie evidence that the person or persons did so with  
250 knowledge of the character of the substance or substances.

251 (10) This section does not prohibit a veterinarian, in good faith and in the course of the  
252 veterinarian's professional practice only and not for humans, from prescribing, dispensing, or  
253 administering controlled substances or from causing the substances to be administered by an  
254 assistant or orderly under the veterinarian's direction and supervision.

255 (11) Civil or criminal liability may not be imposed under this section on:

256 (a) a person registered under this chapter who manufactures, distributes, or possesses  
257 an imitation controlled substance for use as a placebo or investigational new drug by a  
258 registered practitioner in the ordinary course of professional practice or research; or

259 (b) a law enforcement officer acting in the course and legitimate scope of the officer's  
260 employment.

261 (12) (a) Civil or criminal liability may not be imposed under this section on any Indian,  
262 as defined in Section 58-37-2, who uses, possesses, or transports peyote for bona fide  
263 traditional ceremonial purposes in connection with the practice of a traditional Indian religion  
264 as defined in Section 58-37-2.

265 (b) In a prosecution alleging violation of this section regarding peyote as defined in  
266 Section 58-37-4, it is an affirmative defense that the peyote was used, possessed, or transported  
267 by an Indian for bona fide traditional ceremonial purposes in connection with the practice of a  
268 traditional Indian religion.

269 (c) (i) The defendant shall provide written notice of intent to claim an affirmative  
270 defense under this Subsection (12) as soon as practicable, but not later than 10 days before  
271 trial.

272 (ii) The notice shall include the specific claims of the affirmative defense.

273 (iii) The court may waive the notice requirement in the interest of justice for good  
274 cause shown, if the prosecutor is not unfairly prejudiced by the lack of timely notice.

275 (d) The defendant shall establish the affirmative defense under this Subsection (12) by

276 a preponderance of the evidence. If the defense is established, it is a complete defense to the  
277 charges.

278 (13) (a) It is an affirmative defense that the person produced, possessed, or  
279 administered a controlled substance listed in Section 58-37-4.2 if the person was:

280 (i) engaged in medical research; and

281 (ii) a holder of a valid license to possess controlled substances under Section 58-37-6.

282 (b) It is not a defense under Subsection (13)(a) that the person prescribed or dispensed  
283 a controlled substance listed in Section 58-37-4.2.

284 (14) It is an affirmative defense that the person possessed, in the person's body, a  
285 controlled substance listed in Section 58-37-4.2 if:

286 (a) the person was the subject of medical research conducted by a holder of a valid  
287 license to possess controlled substances under Section 58-37-6; and

288 (b) the substance was administered to the person by the medical researcher.

289 (15) The application of any increase in penalty under this section to a violation of  
290 Subsection (2)(a)(i) may not result in any greater penalty than a second degree felony. This  
291 Subsection (15) takes precedence over any conflicting provision of this section.

292 (16) (a) It is an affirmative defense to an allegation of the commission of an offense  
293 listed in Subsection (16)(b) that the person or bystander:

294 (i) reasonably believes that the person or another person is experiencing an overdose  
295 event due to the ingestion, injection, inhalation, or other introduction into the human body of a  
296 controlled substance or other substance;

297 (ii) reports, or assists a person who reports, in good faith the overdose event to a  
298 medical provider, an emergency medical service provider as defined in Section 26-8a-102, a  
299 law enforcement officer, a 911 emergency call system, or an emergency dispatch system, or the  
300 person is the subject of a report made under this Subsection (16);

301 (iii) provides in the report under Subsection (16)(a)(ii) a functional description of the  
302 actual location of the overdose event that facilitates responding to the person experiencing the  
303 overdose event;

304 (iv) remains at the location of the person experiencing the overdose event until a  
305 responding law enforcement officer or emergency medical service provider arrives, or remains  
306 at the medical care facility where the person experiencing an overdose event is located until a

307 responding law enforcement officer arrives;

308 (v) cooperates with the responding medical provider, emergency medical service  
309 provider, and law enforcement officer, including providing information regarding the person  
310 experiencing the overdose event and any substances the person may have injected, inhaled, or  
311 otherwise introduced into the person's body; and

312 (vi) is alleged to have committed the offense in the same course of events from which  
313 the reported overdose arose.

314 (b) The offenses referred to in Subsection (16)(a) are:

315 (i) the possession or use of less than 16 ounces of marijuana;

316 (ii) the possession or use of a scheduled or listed controlled substance other than  
317 marijuana; and

318 (iii) any violation of Chapter 37a, Utah Drug Paraphernalia Act, or Chapter 37b,  
319 Imitation Controlled Substances Act.

320 (c) As used in this Subsection (16) and in Section 76-3-203.11, "good faith" does not  
321 include seeking medical assistance under this section during the course of a law enforcement  
322 agency's execution of a search warrant, execution of an arrest warrant, or other lawful search.

323 (17) If any provision of this chapter, or the application of any provision to any person  
324 or circumstances, is held invalid, the remainder of this chapter shall be given effect without the  
325 invalid provision or application.

326 (18) A legislative body of a political subdivision may not enact an ordinance that is  
327 less restrictive than any provision of this chapter.

328 (19) If a minor who is under 18 years [~~of age~~] old is found by a court to have violated  
329 this section, the court may order the minor to complete:

330 (a) a screening as defined in Section 41-6a-501;

331 (b) an assessment as defined in Section 41-6a-501 if the screening indicates an  
332 assessment to be appropriate; and

333 (c) an educational series as defined in Section 41-6a-501 or substance use disorder  
334 treatment as indicated by an assessment.