

20.3 WELFARE FRAUD — FAILURE TO DISCLOSE A MATERIAL FACT

§ 414.39(1)(a), Fla. Stat.

To prove the crime of Welfare Fraud — Failure to Disclose a Material Fact, the State must prove the following two elements beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. (Defendant) **knowingly failed to disclose a material fact by false statement, misrepresentation, impersonation, or other fraudulent means.**
2. **The fact was [used] [to be used] to determine (defendant's) qualification to receive public assistance from any state or federally funded public assistance program.**

§ 414.39(5), Fla. Stat.

If you find (Defendant) guilty of Welfare Fraud, you must also determine if the State proved beyond a reasonable doubt whether the value of the public assistance wrongfully [received] [retained] [misappropriated] [sought] [used] was:

- a. **less than an aggregate value of \$200 in any 12 consecutive months.**
- b. **an aggregate value of \$200 or more, but less than \$20,000 in any 12 consecutive months.**
- c. **an aggregate value of \$20,000 or more, but less than \$100,000 in any 12 consecutive months.**
- d. **\$100,000 or more in any 12 consecutive months.**

§ 414.39(5)(e), Fla. Stat.

The value of a food assistance authorization benefit is the cash or exchange value unlawfully obtained by the fraudulent act.

Definitions. Give as applicable.

“Fraudulent” means the intent or purpose of suppressing the truth or perpetrating a deception.

§ 414.39(5)(f), Fla. Stat.

“Fraud” includes the introduction of fraudulent records into a computer system, the unauthorized use of computer facilities, the intentional or deliberate alteration or destruction of computerized information or files, and the stealing of financial instruments, data, and other assets.

“Aid or abet” means help, assist, or facilitate.

“Knowingly” means with actual knowledge and understanding of the facts or the truth.

Optional Definition

“Knowingly” means an act done voluntarily and intentionally and not because of mistake or accident or other innocent reason. (Devitt & Blackmar — Federal Jury Practice and Instructions, Sec. 16.07)

Give if applicable. § 414.39(7), Fla. Stat.

It is not a defense that the defendant repaid the assistance or services obtained.

Inferences. Give as applicable. § 414.39(8)(a), Fla. Stat.

You may conclude that (defendant) did receive public assistance from the state if you find that there was a paid state warrant made to the order of the defendant.

§ 414.39(8)(b), Fla. Stat.

You may conclude that an identified recipient received public assistance from the state if you find that a transaction history generated by a Personal Identification Number (PIN) established a purchase or withdrawal by electronic benefit transfer.

Lesser Included Offenses

No lesser included offenses have been identified for this offense.

Comment

This instruction was adopted in 1981 and amended in 2015.