

New laws: Penalties for illegally killing certain wildlife will double

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The new law applies even in cases where the specific job title or government department used by the impostor does not actually exist.

Oregon's previous identity theft law was interpreted by the courts to only apply to impersonations that involved financial fraud, leaving prosecutors unable to charge those who did so only to intimidate or embarrass. The new law defines "injury" to include physical harm, threats, harassment and intimidation.

The crime is a Class A misdemeanor punishable with up to a year in prison and/or a \$6,250 fine (a separate law already in effect makes impersonating a police officer or judge a Class C felony).

Poaching penalties

Would-be poachers who get caught unlawfully taking or killing wildlife will face substantially higher fines in the new year.

The penalty for illegally killing moose, mountain sheep and mountain goats will double from \$25,000 to \$50,000. A variety of other fees will increase significantly, including a hike from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for oversized sturgeon and from \$100 to \$1,000 for wild turkeys and sage grouse.

Sky lanterns

If you were planning on kicking off the new year by releasing a glowing Chinese lantern into the atmosphere for good luck, think again.

The lanterns (known as sky lanterns, Chinese lanterns, UFO balloons or wish lanterns) are "mini hot air balloons" made of a paper sack over an open flame that pushes the lantern into the air.

House Bill 4140 prohibits the release of the lanterns into Oregon airspace. Oregon fire marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple called the uncontrolled, open-flame devices an "extreme fire hazard."

"Once released you have no control over where they may land," she said. "They could end up on someone's rooftop, in a tree, or a pile of debris and cause an unwanted fire."

The Class A violation will now be punishable by up to \$2,000 in fines.

Sex crimes

Victims of rape, child abuse or other first-degree sex crimes no longer need to worry about their abusers hiding behind a statute of limitations.

Senate Bill 1600 removed the 12-year statute of limitations on first-degree sex crimes in Oregon, as long as the pros-



EO Media Group/File Photos

New laws will take effect in Oregon beginning Jan. 1, including increased fines for poaching, criminal penalties for impersonating military personnel or public servant to intimidate another, a widened definition of soliciting prostitution and the banning of sky lanterns.

ecution has corroborating evidence of the crime or multiple victims come forward.

That law is joined by Senate Bill 1571, known as Melissa's Law, which requires that all sexual assault forensic evidence kits be kept for at least 60 years after collection. It also directs the Oregon State Police to create a position or group of positions to handle inquiries from victims and other law enforcement agencies about the testing of kits, and prioritizes the testing of kits that are connected with active cases in which the victim has agreed to participate in prosecution.

Immigration consulting

If you're an immigrant concerned about your status under a new presidential administration, you'll be happy to know that fake immigration attorneys preying on worried immigrants will now face charges of obstructing justice if they get caught.

House Bill 4128 adds unlicensed immigration consulting "with the intent to defraud" to the list of reasons someone can be charged with obstructing governmental or judicial administration. It also adds offering unauthorized notary services "with the intent to defraud."

The new law amends Oregon's definition of extortion to include threatening to reveal a someone's immigration status to law enforcement if they (or a family member or friend) do not deliver services or goods

or refrain from reporting illegal activity.

Obstruction is a Class A misdemeanor, while extortion is a Class B felony.

Whistleblower protections

Handing over evidence of your boss's corruption, abuse or fraud won't carry the same risks it used to thanks to the whistleblower protections implemented with House Bill 6047.

State employees and non-profit workers will be given affirmative defense — which amounts to protection from criminal or civil penalties for the commission of a specific crime — for giving lawfully obtained information about wrongdoing to a law enforcement agency, regulatory agency or manager.

Prostitution

The definition of "promoting prostitution" has been expanded in Oregon, thanks to House Bill 4082.

Previously sex trafficking could only be prosecuted if the one "promoting prostitution" was receiving money or property in exchange for their role in facilitating the sexual encounter. The charge of promoting prostitution will now apply to receiving "goods and services derived from prostitution" including benefits like shelter or manual labor.

Postmortem account access

You can now leave your

Twitter handle or Instagram photos to someone in your will.

The Revised Uniform Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets Act addresses a problem for the digital age: People are having difficulty getting companies to give them access to their loved ones' digital assets after they die.

Oregon's legislature joined several other states in enacting the law, which requires social media companies and other online platforms to give access to social media accounts, blogs, online videos, photos stored in "the cloud" and other digital assets to fiduciaries named in wills, or give users an option such as Facebook's "legacy contact" setting that allows users to name a third party who can access their account in the event of their death.

Juneau Police launch 2017 kindness campaign

'Kindness surges' will travel around

By RACHEL D'ORO
Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Following a year of deadly confrontations between police and citizens across the U.S., police in Alaska's capital city are spearheading a campaign to turn 2017 into a community-wide year of kindness.

Juneau Police will kick off the campaign with public potlucks on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day to encourage locals to commit daily acts of kindness and to reach out weekly to individuals outside their usual circles.

Groups, businesses, government agencies and others also are choosing a different week of the year for their employees to conduct "kindness surges," with correctional officers at the local prison taking the first week.

Ideas being considered include visiting local senior homes, distributing care packages and paying for a stranger's meal.

Measure impact

The goal is to measure the impact of kindness on such areas as crimes, suicides and emergency calls at the end of 2017, according to Lt. Kris Sell, who hatched the idea in a partnership with the global kindness advocate, Random Acts, and others.

"Can you change the quality of life in a community and prove that you have done so?" Sell said.

Jennifer Willis-Rivera, development manager for the nonprofit Random Acts, knows of no similar endeavors by a police department or city anywhere. She plans to visit Juneau in January and again a year after that.

To her, the excitement will come in seeing the results after an entire year focused on kindness. "It's something that

everybody talks about all the time, but usually we're really only focused on it around the holidays, when there's a tragedy," she said.

Sell said the idea emerged several months ago as she contemplated what direction Juneau police could take in 2017.

She said some "really hateful things" had just happened nationally, including the ambush killings of five law enforcement officers in Dallas who had been working to keep the peace at a protest over the fatal police shootings of black men in Minnesota and Louisiana.

Juneau has had its own share of violence, including the nonfatal shooting of a man Dec. 3, months after police first announced plans for the kindness project. No charges have been filed. Police have released few details, saying the shooting is under investigation.

That was the first police-involved shooting since August 2007, when police fatally shot a sword-wielding man. Juneau police also shot at a fleeing suspect's vehicle in 2008, but nobody was hit.

'Goosebumps'

Some locals, including students, already are exercising their kindness muscles.

Last week, special education students from Juneau-Douglas High School traveled across town to hand out candy canes at Thunder Mountain High School. A 17-year-old Thunder Mountain senior died in September after accidentally shooting himself.

Special education teacher Janette Gagnon said students wanted to offer some cross-town support.

Thunder Mountain principal Dan Larson got one of the candy canes from student Mitchell Henderson, who wore a festive Santa hat. Larson said it's been a tough year for the school. "We need this," he said of the holiday cheer spread by the visiting students.

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