



## 2025 SENATE BILL 15

February 5, 2025 - Introduced by Senators JACQUE and CARPENTER, cosponsored by Representatives KREIBICH, BEHNKE, DITTRICH, GUNDRUM, MURPHY, MURSAU, TUSLER, WICHGERS, ALLEN, DONOVAN, TENORIO and KNODL. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.

1     **AN ACT** *to renumber* 940.198 (1) (a) and 971.109 (1) (a); *to renumber and*  
2         *amend* 939.623 (1); *to amend* 343.12 (7) (c) 9j., 813.12 (5b), 813.123 (6g),  
3         813.125 (5b), 911.01 (4) (c), 939.623 (title), 939.623 (2) (intro.), 939.623 (3),  
4         940.198 (title), 940.198 (1) (b), 940.198 (2) (a), 940.198 (2) (b), 940.198 (2) (c),  
5         940.198 (3) (a), 940.198 (3) (b), 940.198 (3) (c), 940.198 (4), 971.109 (title),  
6         971.109 (2) (a) and 971.109 (2) (c); and *to create* 813.12 (1) (ab), 813.125 (1)  
7         (am) 2., 939.623 (1) (b), 940.198 (1) (ag), 940.225 (1) (e) and 971.109 (1) (ac) of  
8         the statutes; **relating to:** increased penalties for crimes against adults at risk;  
9         restraining orders for adults at risk; freezing assets of a defendant charged  
10         with financial exploitation of an adult at risk; sexual assault of an adult at  
11         risk; and providing a penalty.

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**SENATE BILL 15*****Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*****SEXUAL ASSAULT OF AN ADULT AT RISK**

Under this bill, any act of sexual misconduct that is currently a second degree sexual assault is a first degree sexual assault if the victim is an adult at risk. Under current law, if a person engages in any of the specified acts of sexual misconduct, he or she is guilty of a Class C felony. Under the bill, he or she is guilty of a Class B felony if the victim is an adult at risk, regardless of whether or not he or she knew the victim's status as an adult at risk.

**FREEZING OF ASSETS**

Under current law, there is a procedure for a court to freeze or seize assets from a defendant who has been charged with a financial exploitation crime when the victim is an elder person. The procedure allows a court to freeze the funds, assets, or property of the defendant in an amount up to 100 percent of the alleged value of the property involved in the defendant's pending criminal proceeding for purposes of preserving the property for future payment of restitution to the crime victim.

This bill allows the court to apply the same procedure to freeze or seize assets when the crime victim an adult at risk.

**PHYSICAL ABUSE OF AN ADULT AT RISK**

Under current law, there is a set of penalties that apply to physical abuse of an elder person, which range from a Class I felony to a Class C felony depending on the severity of the conduct. This bill applies those same penalties to physical abuse of an adult at risk.

**INCREASED PENALTIES**

This bill allows a term of imprisonment that is imposed for a criminal conviction to be increased in length if the crime victim was an adult at risk. Under the bill, a maximum term of imprisonment of one year or less may be increased to two years; a maximum term of imprisonment of one to 10 years may be increased by up to four years; and a maximum term of imprisonment of more than 10 years may be increased by up to six years. Under the bill, the term of imprisonment may be lengthened irrespective of whether the defendant knew that the crime victim was an adult at risk.

**RESTRAINING ORDERS FOR AN ADULT AT RISK**

Under current law, a person seeking a domestic violence, individual-at-risk, or harassment restraining order must appear in person in the courtroom at a hearing to obtain a restraining order.

This bill allows an adult at risk who is seeking a domestic violence, individual-at-risk, or harassment restraining order to appear in a court hearing by telephone or live audiovisual means.

Because this bill creates a new crime or revises a penalty for an existing crime,

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the Joint Review Committee on Criminal Penalties may be requested to prepare a report.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

1           **SECTION 1.** 343.12 (7) (c) 9j. of the statutes is amended to read:

2           343.12 (7) (c) 9j. Physical abuse of an elder person or an adult at risk under s.  
3 940.198 (2).

4           **SECTION 2.** 813.12 (1) (ab) of the statutes is created to read:

5           813.12 (1) (ab) “Adult at risk” has the meaning given in s. 55.01 (1e).

6           **SECTION 3.** 813.12 (5b) of the statutes is amended to read:

7           813.12 (5b) **ELDER PERSON** OR ADULT-AT-RISK PETITIONER. If the petitioner is  
8 an elder person or an adult at risk, the court shall permit the petitioner to  
9 participate in hearings under this section by telephone or live audiovisual means.

10          **SECTION 4.** 813.123 (6g) of the statutes is amended to read:

11          813.123 (6g) ~~ELDER ADULT AT RISK~~ INDIVIDUAL-AT-RISK PETITIONER. If the  
12 petitioner is an ~~elder adult~~ individual at risk, the court shall permit the petitioner  
13 to participate in hearings under this section by telephone or live audiovisual means.

14          **SECTION 5.** 813.125 (1) (am) 2. of the statutes is created to read:

15          813.125 (1) (am) 2. “Adult at risk” has the meaning given in s. 55.01 (1e).

16          **SECTION 6.** 813.125 (5b) of the statutes is amended to read:

17          813.125 (5b) **ELDER PERSON** OR ADULT-AT-RISK PETITIONER. If the petitioner is  
18 an elder person or an adult at risk, the court shall permit the petitioner to  
19 participate in hearings under this section by telephone or live audiovisual means.

20          **SECTION 7.** 911.01 (4) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1           911.01 (4) (c) *Miscellaneous proceedings.* Proceedings for extradition or  
2 rendition; sentencing, granting or revoking probation, modification of a bifurcated  
3 sentence under s. 302.113 (9g), or adjustment of a bifurcated sentence under s.  
4 973.195 (1r) or 973.198; hearings for the freezing of assets of a person charged with  
5 financial exploitation of an elder person or adult at risk under s. 971.109; issuance  
6 of subpoenas or warrants under s. 968.375, arrest warrants, criminal summonses,  
7 and search warrants; hearings under s. 980.09 (2); proceedings under s. 971.14 (1r)  
8 (c); proceedings with respect to pretrial release under ch. 969 except where habeas  
9 corpus is utilized with respect to release on bail or as otherwise provided in ch. 969;  
10 or proceedings under s. 165.76 (6) to compel provision of a biological specimen for  
11 deoxyribonucleic acid analysis.

12           **SECTION 8.** 939.623 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

13           **939.623** (title) **Increased penalty for elder person or adult-at-risk**  
14 **victims.**

15           **SECTION 9.** 939.623 (1) of the statutes is renumbered 939.623 (1) (intro.) and  
16 amended to read:

17           939.623 (1) (intro.) In this section, ~~“elder:~~

18           (c) “Elder person” means any individual who is 60 years of age or older.

19           **SECTION 10.** 939.623 (1) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

20           939.623 (1) (b) “Adult at risk” has the meaning given in s. 55.01 (1e).

21           **SECTION 11.** 939.623 (2) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

22           939.623 (2) (intro.) If the crime victim is an elder person or an adult at risk,  
23 and the present conviction is for any crime for which imprisonment may be

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1 imposed, the maximum term of imprisonment prescribed by law for that crime may  
2 be increased as follows:

3 **SECTION 12.** 939.623 (3) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 939.623 (3) This section applies irrespective of whether the defendant had  
5 actual knowledge of the crime victim's age or that the crime victim was an adult at  
6 risk at the time of the crime. A mistake regarding the crime victim's age or status  
7 as an adult at risk is not a defense to an increased penalty under this section.

8 **SECTION 13.** 940.198 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

9 **940.198** (title) **Physical abuse of an elder person or an adult at risk.**

10 **SECTION 14.** 940.198 (1) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 940.198 (1) (ar).

11 **SECTION 15.** 940.198 (1) (ag) of the statutes is created to read:

12 940.198 (1) (ag) "Adult at risk" has the meaning given in s. 55.01 (1e).

13 **SECTION 16.** 940.198 (1) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

14 940.198 (1) (b) "Recklessly" means conduct that creates a situation of  
15 unreasonable risk of harm to and demonstrates a conscious disregard for the safety  
16 of the ~~elder~~ person.

17 **SECTION 17.** 940.198 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

18 940.198 (2) (a) Whoever intentionally causes great bodily harm to an elder  
19 person or an adult at risk is guilty of a Class C felony.

20 **SECTION 18.** 940.198 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

21 940.198 (2) (b) Whoever intentionally causes bodily harm to an elder person  
22 or an adult at risk is guilty of a Class H felony.

23 **SECTION 19.** 940.198 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1           940.198 (2) (c) Whoever intentionally causes bodily harm to an elder person or  
2 an adult at risk under circumstances or conditions that are likely to produce great  
3 bodily harm is guilty of a Class F felony.

4           **SECTION 20.** 940.198 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

5           940.198 (3) (a) Whoever recklessly causes great bodily harm to an elder  
6 person or an adult at risk is guilty of a Class E felony.

7           **SECTION 21.** 940.198 (3) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

8           940.198 (3) (b) Whoever recklessly causes bodily harm to an elder person or  
9 an adult at risk is guilty of a Class I felony.

10          **SECTION 22.** 940.198 (3) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

11          940.198 (3) (c) Whoever recklessly causes bodily harm to an elder person or an  
12 adult at risk under circumstances or conditions that are likely to produce great  
13 bodily harm is guilty of a Class H felony.

14          **SECTION 23.** 940.198 (4) of the statutes is amended to read:

15          940.198 (4) KNOWLEDGE OF AGE OR AT RISK STATUS NOT REQUIRED. This  
16 section applies irrespective of whether the defendant had actual knowledge of the  
17 victim's age or status as an adult at risk. A mistake regarding the victim's age or  
18 status as an adult at risk is not a defense to a prosecution under this section.

19          **SECTION 24.** 940.225 (1) (e) of the statutes is created to read:

20          940.225 (1) (e) Commits a violation under sub. (2) against an adult at risk, as  
21 defined in s. 55.01 (1e). This paragraph applies irrespective of whether the  
22 defendant had actual knowledge of the victim's status as an adult at risk. A

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1 mistake regarding the victim's status as an adult at risk is not a defense to a  
2 prosecution under this paragraph.

3 **SECTION 25.** 971.109 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

4 **971.109 (title) Freezing assets of a person charged with financial**  
5 **exploitation of an elder person or an adult at risk.**

6 **SECTION 26.** 971.109 (1) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 971.109 (1) (am).

7 **SECTION 27.** 971.109 (1) (ac) of the statutes is created to read:

8 971.109 (1) (ac) "Adult at risk" has the meaning given in s. 55.01 (1e).

9 **SECTION 28.** 971.109 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

10 971.109 (2) (a) If a defendant is charged with a crime that is financial  
11 exploitation, the crime involves the taking or loss of property valued at more than  
12 \$2,500, and the crime victim is an elder person or an adult at risk, a prosecuting  
13 attorney may file a petition with the court in which the defendant has been charged  
14 to freeze the funds, assets, or property of the defendant in an amount up to 100  
15 percent of the alleged value of funds, assets, or property in the defendant's pending  
16 criminal proceeding for purposes of restitution to the crime victim. The hearing on  
17 the petition may be held ex parte. The rules of evidence do not apply in a hearing  
18 under this paragraph.

19 **SECTION 29.** 971.109 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

20 971.109 (2) (c) The court's order shall prohibit the sale, gifting, transfer, or  
21 wasting of the funds, assets, or real or personal property of the elder person or adult  
22 at risk that are owned by or vested in the defendant without the express permission  
23 of the court. The court's order shall be binding upon a financial institution, as

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**SECTION 29**

1 defined in s. 943.80 (2), and any 3rd party that is in possession of the funds, assets,  
2 or property.

3 (END)