

CHAPTER 665

CONTEMPTS

Referred to in [§20.12](#), [81.4](#), [123.23](#), [125.83](#), [229.13](#), [252B.26](#), [331.654](#), [356A.3](#), [692A.109](#), [717B.3B](#), [815.9](#), [815.11](#)

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665.1 “Court” defined.

Any officer authorized to punish for contempt is a court within the meaning of [this chapter](#). [C51, §1608; R60, §2698; C73, §3501; C97, §4470; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, **§12540**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.1]

665.2 Acts constituting contempt.

The following acts or omissions are contempts, and are punishable as such by any of the courts of this state, or by any judicial officer, including judicial magistrates, acting in the discharge of an official duty, as hereinafter provided:

1. Contemptuous or insolent behavior toward such court while engaged in the discharge of a judicial duty which may tend to impair the respect due to its authority.
 2. Any willful disturbance calculated to interrupt the due course of its official proceedings.
 3. Illegal resistance to any order or process made or issued by it.
 4. Disobedience to any subpoena issued by it and duly served, or refusing to be sworn or to answer as a witness.
 5. Unlawfully detaining a witness or party to an action or proceeding pending before such court, while going to or remaining at the place where the action or proceeding is thus pending, after being summoned, or knowingly assisting, aiding or abetting any person in evading service of the process of such court.
 6. Any other act or omission specially declared a contempt by law.
- [C51, §1598; R60, §2688; C73, §3491; C97, §4460; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, **§12541**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.2]

Referred to in [§665.3](#)

665.3 In courts of record.

In addition to the acts or omissions in [section 665.2](#), any court of record may punish the following acts or omissions as contempts:

1. Failure to testify before a grand jury, when lawfully required to do so.
 2. Assuming to be an officer, attorney, or counselor of the court, and acting as such without authority.
 3. Misbehavior as a juror, by improperly conversing with a party or with any other person in relation to the merits of an action in which the juror is acting or is to act as a juror, or receiving a communication from any person in respect to it without immediately disclosing the same to the court.
 4. Bribing, attempting to bribe, or in any other manner improperly influencing or attempting to influence a juror to render a verdict, or suborning or attempting to suborn witness.
 5. Disobedience by an inferior tribunal, magistrate, or officer to any lawful judgment, order or process of a superior court, or proceeding in any matter in a manner contrary to law, after it has been removed from such tribunal, magistrate or officer.
- [C51, §1599; R60, §2689; C73, §3492; C97, §4461; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, **§12542**; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.3]

[2017 Acts, ch 29, §162](#)

665.4 Punishment.

The punishment for contempt, where not otherwise specifically provided, shall be:

1. In the supreme court or the court of appeals, by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

2. Before district judges, district associate judges, and associate juvenile judges by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months or by both such fine and imprisonment.

3. Before judicial magistrates, by a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars or imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding thirty days.

[C51, §1600; R60, §2690; C73, §3493; C97, §4462; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12543; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.4]

[85 Acts, ch 27, §1](#); [96 Acts, ch 1134, §6](#)

665.5 Imprisonment.

If the contempt consists in an omission to perform an act which is yet in the power of the person to perform, the person may be imprisoned until the person performs it. In that case the act to be performed must be specified in the warrant of the commitment.

[C51, §1601; R60, §2691; C73, §3494; C97, §4463; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12544; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.5]

665.6 Affidavit necessary.

Unless the contempt is committed in the immediate view and presence of the court, or comes officially to its knowledge, an affidavit showing the nature of the transaction is necessary as a basis for further action in the premises.

[C51, §1602; R60, §2692; C73, §3495; C97, §4464; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12545; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.6]

665.7 Notice to show cause.

Before punishing for contempt, unless the offender is already in the presence of the court, the offender must be served personally with an order to show cause against the punishment, and a reasonable time given the offender therefor; or the offender may be brought before the court forthwith, or on a given day, by warrant, if necessary. In either case the offender may, at the offender's option, make a written explanation of the offender's conduct under oath, which must be filed and preserved.

[C51, §1603; R60, §2693; C73, §3496; C97, §4465; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12546; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.7]

[2010 Acts, ch 1159, §15](#)

665.8 Testimony reduced to writing.

Where the action of the court is founded upon evidence given by others, such evidence must be in writing, and be filed and preserved.

[C51, §1604; R60, §2694; C73, §3497; C97, §4466; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12547; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.8]

665.9 Personal knowledge of court — record required.

If the court or judge acts upon personal knowledge in the premises, a statement of the facts upon which the order is founded must be entered on the records of the court, or be filed and preserved when the court keeps no record, and shall be a part of the record.

[C51, §1604; R60, §2694; C73, §3497; C97, §4466; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12548; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.9]

665.10 Warrant of commitment.

When the offender is committed, the warrant must state the particular facts and circumstances on which the court acted in the premises, and whether the same was in the knowledge of the court or was proved by witnesses.

[C51, §1605; R60, §2695; C73, §3498; C97, §4467; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12549; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.10]

665.11 Revision by certiorari.

No appeal lies from an order to punish for a contempt, but the proceedings may, in proper cases, be taken to a higher court for revision by certiorari.

[C51, §1606; R60, §2696; C73, §3499; C97, §4468; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12550; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.11]

665.12 Indictment not barred.

The punishment for a contempt constitutes no bar to an indictment, but if the offender is indicted and convicted for the same offense, the court, in passing sentence, must take into consideration the punishment before inflicted.

[C51, §1607; R60, §2697; C73, §3500; C97, §4469; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §12551; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §665.12]