

CHAPTER 803

JURISDICTION OF PUBLIC OFFENSES AND PLACE OF TRIAL

Referred to in §801.1, 809A.2

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803.1 State criminal jurisdiction — erroneous filings.

1. A person is subject to prosecution in this state for an offense which the person commits within or outside this state, by the person’s own conduct or that of another for which the person is legally accountable, if:

- a. The offense is committed either wholly or partly within this state.
- b. Conduct of the person outside the state constitutes an attempt to commit an offense within this state.
- c. Conduct of the person outside the state constitutes a conspiracy to commit an offense within this state.
- d. The offense is based upon a statute that specifically prohibits conduct wholly outside of the state, and the conduct bears a reasonable relation to a legitimate state interest, and the person knows or should know that the conduct is likely to affect that interest.
- e. Conduct of the person within this state constitutes an attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit an offense in another jurisdiction, which conduct is punishable under the laws of both this state and such other jurisdiction.
- f. The offense is committed by a member of the state military forces against another member of the state military forces, both are in a duty status at the time of the offense, whether inside or outside the state, and the offense is one for which civil courts have jurisdiction under [section 29B.116A](#). However, for those offenses subject to both civilian and military jurisdiction, civilian jurisdiction shall not be declined solely on that basis.

2. An offense may be committed partly within this state if conduct which is an element of the offense, or a result which constitutes an element of the offense, occurs within this state. If the body of a murder victim is found within the state, the death is presumed to have occurred within the state. If a kidnapping victim, or the body of a kidnapping victim, is found within the state, the confinement or removal of the victim from one place to another is presumed to have occurred within the state.

3. An offense which is based on an omission to perform a duty imposed upon a person by the law of this state is committed within the state, regardless of the location of the person at the time of the omission.

4. The jurisdiction of the criminal court includes the prosecution of any individual arrested who is eighteen years of age or older and who is charged with committing a criminal offense. If the individual is alleged to have committed the offense prior to having reached the age of eighteen, that individual or the county attorney may petition the criminal court to transfer the matter to juvenile court, pursuant to [section 803.5](#).

5. If it is determined that charges were erroneously filed in district court against an individual under the age of eighteen and the juvenile court holds exclusive jurisdiction, the court shall file an order dismissing the charge in district court and directing the clerk of court to seal all records of the charge initiated in district court.

[C51, §2803; R60, §4500; C73, §4155; C97, §5153; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §13448; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §753.1; C79, 81, §803.1]

[88 Acts, ch 1167, §4](#); [95 Acts, ch 178, §1](#); [2000 Acts, ch 1037, §3](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1069, §6](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1153, §13](#)

Referred to in [§710.10](#)

803.2 Place of trial — general.

1. A criminal action shall be tried in the county in which the crime is committed, except as otherwise provided by law.

2. The court, may on its own motion or on the motion of any of the parties to the proceeding reconsider and grant a pretrial motion for change of venue whenever it appears during jury selection that sufficient grounds would exist for granting the motion under the provisions of [rule of criminal procedure 2.11](#).

3. All objections to venue are waived by a defendant unless the defendant objects thereto and secures a ruling by the trial court on a pretrial motion for change of venue. However, if venue is changed pursuant to [subsection 2](#), all objections to venue in the county to which the action is transferred are waived by a defendant unless the defendant objects by a motion for change of venue filed within five days after entry of the order transferring the action and secures a ruling by the trial court on the motion before a jury has been impaneled and sworn.

[R60, §4502; C73, §4156; C97, §5154; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §13449; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, §753.2; C79, 81, §803.2; [82 Acts, ch 1021, §7, 12\(1\)](#)]

Referred to in [§803.3](#)

803.3 Place of trial — special provisions.

The following special provisions apply:

1. If conduct or results which constitute elements of an offense occur in two or more counties, prosecution of the offense may be had in any of such counties. In such cases, where a dominant number of elements occur in one county, that county shall have the primary right to proceed with prosecution of the offender.

2. If an offense commenced outside the state is consummated within this state, trial of the offense shall be held in the county or counties in which the offense is consummated or the interest protected by the involved penal statute is impaired.

3. If an offense is committed in or upon any conveyance in transit, and it cannot readily be determined in which county the offense was committed, trial of the offense may be held in any county through or over which the conveyance passed in the course of its journey.

4. If an offense is committed on the boundary of two or more counties, and it cannot readily be determined within which county the commission took place, trial of the offense may be held in any of the counties concerned.

5. If a simple misdemeanor is committed in a city which is located in two or more counties, venue shall be in the county in which the seat of government of the city is located. However, if the simple misdemeanor is committed in conjunction with an offense greater than a simple misdemeanor, the trial of the simple misdemeanor shall be in the county where the greater offense was committed as provided in [section 803.2](#).

6. If the offense is a traffic offense, or a scheduled offense under [section 805.8A](#), [805.8B](#), or [805.8C](#), [section 805.13](#) shall apply.

7. *a.* If a person is charged with a violation of the tax laws arising out of individual tax liability, venue is in the county of residence of the person charged with the offense, unless the person is a nonresident of this state or the residence of the person cannot be established, in which event venue is in Polk county.

b. If a person is charged with a violation of the tax laws arising out of a business, venue is in any county where business was conducted. If a specific county cannot be established as a situs, venue is in Polk county.

c. If a person is charged with a violation of [section 453B.12](#), venue is in the county of the residence of the person charged with the offense or the county in which the drugs were found.

d. If a person is charged with a violation of the tax laws in which venue is set under multiple provisions of [this section](#), venue is in any county in which one of the charges may be prosecuted.

8. *a.* Except as otherwise provided in [this section](#), if the county in which an offense was committed cannot be readily determined, trial of the offense shall be held in the county of residence of the victim.

b. If there is no victim, the victim is not a resident of this state, or the residence of the

victim cannot be established, trial of the offense shall be held in the county of residence of the person charged with the offense.

c. If the victim is not a natural person, venue for trial of the offense is proper in any county where the victim has a physical presence.

d. If there is more than one victim, trial of the offenses may be held in any county in which a victim resides with the county of residence of a natural person taking priority over the county of residence of other victims.

[C51, §2804, 2806 – 2808; R60, §4505, 4507 – 4509; C73, §4157, 4159 – 4161; C97, §5155, 5157 – 5159; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §13450, 13451 – 13453; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §753.3 – 753.6; C73, 75, 77, §753.3; C79, 81, §803.3]

99 Acts, ch 152, §37, 40; 2001 Acts, ch 137, §5; 2003 Acts, ch 113, §2; 2004 Acts, ch 1041, §1; 2025 Acts, ch 24, §1

Referred to in §124.401, 805.13
NEW subsection 8

803.4 Bar to action.

A conviction or acquittal of an offense in a court having jurisdiction thereof is a bar to a prosecution of the offense in another court.

[R60, §4512; C73, §4164; C97, §5162; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §13457; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §753.10; C73, 75, 77, §753.4; C79, 81, §803.4]

803.5 Transfer of jurisdiction.

1. An adult who is alleged to have committed a criminal offense prior to having reached the age of eighteen may be transferred to juvenile court for adjudication and disposition as a juvenile, provided that the taking of that person into custody for the alleged act or the filing of a complaint, information, or indictment alleging the act, occurs within the time periods and under the conditions specified in [chapter 802](#) and further provided that the juvenile court has not already waived its jurisdiction over the person and the alleged offense.

2. The defendant or the county attorney may file a motion for the transfer any time within ten days of the initial appearance.

3. The court shall hold a transfer hearing on all such motions. A notice of the time and place of the transfer hearing shall be given to all parties to the hearing.

4. Prior to the transfer hearing, the juvenile probation officer, or other person or agency designated by the court, shall conduct an investigation for the purpose of collecting information relevant to the court's decision to waive its jurisdiction over the defendant for the alleged commission of the public offense and shall submit a report concerning the investigation to the court. The report shall include any recommendations made concerning transfer. Prior to the hearing the court shall provide the defendant's counsel and the county attorney with access to the report and to all written material to be considered by the court.

5. After the hearing, the court may transfer jurisdiction to the juvenile court if the court determines that there is probable cause to believe that the adult committed an offense while still a juvenile, and waiver to the criminal court would be inappropriate under the criteria set forth in [section 232.45, subsection 6](#), paragraph "c", and [section 232.45, subsection 8](#), if the adult were still a child.

6. If after the hearing the court transfers jurisdiction over the adult to the juvenile court for the alleged commission of the public offense, the court shall forward the transfer order together with all papers, documents, and a transcript of all testimony filed or admitted into evidence in connection with the case to the clerk of the juvenile court in the same manner as provided in [section 232.8, subsection 2](#).

88 Acts, ch 1167, §5

Referred to in §232.8, 803.1

803.6 Transfer of jurisdiction — juvenile.

1. The court, in the case of a juvenile who is alleged to have committed a criminal offense listed in [section 232.8, subsection 1](#), paragraph "c", may direct a juvenile court officer to provide a report regarding whether the child should be transferred to juvenile court for adjudication and disposition as a juvenile.

2. If the court believes that transfer may be appropriate the court shall hold a hearing on whether the child should be transferred. A notice of the time and place of the transfer hearing shall be given to all parties to the case. Prior to the hearing, the court shall provide the defendant's counsel and the county attorney with access to the report provided by the juvenile court officer and to all written material to be considered by the court.

3. After the hearing, the court may transfer jurisdiction to the juvenile court if the court determines that waiver to the criminal court would be inappropriate under the criteria set forth in [section 232.45, subsection 6](#), paragraph "c", and [section 232.45, subsection 8](#).

4. If after the hearing the court transfers jurisdiction over the defendant to the juvenile court for the alleged commission of the public offense, the court shall forward the transfer order together with all papers, documents, and a transcript of all testimony filed or admitted into evidence in connection with the case to the clerk of the juvenile court in the same manner as provided in [section 232.8, subsection 2](#), and the clerk shall seal all records initiated in district court.

5. A defendant transferred to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court shall be placed in detention under [section 232.22](#).

[95 Acts, ch 191, §54](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1153, §14](#)

Referred to in [§232.8, 232.149](#)