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18 U.S. Code § 201 - Bribery of public officials and witnesses

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(a) For the purpose of this section—

- (1)**

the term “[public official](#)” means Member of Congress, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner, either before or after such official has qualified, or an officer or employee or person acting for or on behalf of the United States, or any department, agency or branch of Government thereof, including the District of Columbia, in any official function, under or by authority of any such department, agency, or branch of Government, or a juror;
- (2)**

the term “[person who has been selected to be a public official](#)” means any person who has been nominated or appointed to be a [public official](#), or has been officially informed that such person will be so nominated or appointed; and
- (3)**

the term “[official act](#)” means any decision or action on any question, matter, cause, suit, proceeding or controversy, which may at any time be pending, or which may by law be brought before any [public official](#), in such official’s official capacity, or in such official’s place of trust or profit.

(b) Whoever—

- (1)**

directly or indirectly, corruptly gives, offers or promises anything of value to any [public official](#) or [person who has been selected to be a public official](#), or offers or promises any [public official](#) or any [person who has been selected to be a public official](#) to give anything of value to any other person or entity, with intent—

(A)

to influence any [official act](#); or

(B)

to influence such [public official](#) or [person who has been selected to be a public official](#) to commit or aid in committing, or collude in, or allow, any fraud, or make opportunity for the commission of any fraud, on the United States; or

(C)

to induce such [public official](#) or such [person who has been selected to be a public official](#) to do or omit to do any act in violation of the lawful duty of such official or person;
- (2)**

being a [public official](#) or person selected to be a [public official](#), directly or indirectly, corruptly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally or for any other person or entity, in return for:

(A)

being influenced in the performance of any [official act](#);

(B)

being influenced to commit or aid in committing, or to collude in, or allow, any fraud, or make opportunity for the commission of any fraud, on the United States; or

(C)

being induced to do or omit to do any act in violation of the official duty of such official or person;
- (3)**

directly or indirectly, corruptly gives, offers, or promises anything of value to any person, or offers or promises such person to give anything of value to any other person or entity, with intent to influence the testimony under oath or affirmation of such first-mentioned person as a witness upon a trial, hearing, or other proceeding, before any court, any committee of either House or both Houses of Congress, or any agency, commission, or officer authorized by the laws of the United States to hear evidence or take testimony, or with intent to influence such person to absent himself therefrom;
- (4)**

directly or indirectly, corruptly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally or for any other person or entity in return for being influenced in testimony under oath or affirmation as a witness upon any such trial, hearing, or other proceeding, or in return for absenting himself therefrom; shall be fined under this title or not more than three times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value, whichever is greater, or imprisoned for not more than fifteen years, or both, and may be disqualified from holding any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.

(c) Whoever—

- (1)**

otherwise than as provided by law for the proper discharge of official duty—

(A)

directly or indirectly gives, offers, or promises anything of value to any [public official](#), former [public official](#), or person selected to be a [public official](#), for or because of any [official act](#) performed or to be performed by such [public official](#), former [public official](#), or person selected to be a [public official](#); or

(B)

being a [public official](#), former [public official](#), or person selected to be a [public official](#), otherwise than as provided by law for the proper discharge of official duty, directly or indirectly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally for or because of any [official act](#) performed or to be performed by such official or person;
- (2)**

directly or indirectly, gives, offers, or promises anything of value to any person, for or because of the testimony under oath or affirmation given or to be given by such person as a witness upon a trial, hearing, or other proceeding, before any court, any committee of either House or both Houses of Congress, or any agency, commission, or officer authorized by the laws of the United States to hear evidence or take testimony, or for or because of such person’s absence therefrom;
- (3)**

directly or indirectly, demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally for or because of the testimony under oath or affirmation given or to be given by such person as a witness upon any such trial, hearing, or other proceeding, or for or because of such person’s absence therefrom; shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for not more than two years, or both.

(d) Paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (b) and paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (c) shall not be construed to prohibit the payment or receipt of witness fees provided by law, or the payment, by the party upon whose behalf a witness is called and receipt by a witness, of the reasonable cost of travel and subsistence incurred and the reasonable value of time lost in attendance at any such trial, hearing, or proceeding, or in the case of expert witnesses, a reasonable fee for time spent in the preparation of such opinion, and in appearing and testifying.

(e) The offenses and penalties prescribed in this section are separate from and in addition to those prescribed in sections [1503](#), [1504](#), and [1505](#) of this title.

(Added [Pub. L. 87–849, § 1\(a\)](#), Oct. 23, 1962, [76 Stat. 1119](#); amended [Pub. L. 91–405, title II, § 204\(d\)\(1\)](#), Sept. 22, 1970, [84 Stat. 853](#); [Pub. L. 99–646, § 46\(a\)–\(l\)](#), Nov. 10, 1986, [100 Stat. 3601–3604](#); [Pub. L. 103–322, title XXXIII](#), §§ 330011(b), 330016(2)(D), Sept. 13, 1994, [108 Stat. 2144](#), 2148; [Pub. L. 118–31, div. E, title LI, § 5101](#), Dec. 22, 2023, [137 Stat. 931](#); [Pub. L. 118–78, § 2\(a\)](#), July 30, 2024, [138 Stat. 1512](#).)