DISCLAIMER

The South Carolina Legislative Council is offering access to the unannotated South Carolina Code of Laws on the Internet as a service to the public. The unannotated South Carolina Code on the General Assembly's website is now current through the 2009 session. The unannotated South Carolina Code, consisting only of Code text and numbering, may be copied from this website at the reader's expense and effort without need for permission.

The Legislative Council is unable to assist users of this service with legal questions. Also, legislative staff cannot respond to requests for legal advice or the application of the law to specific facts. Therefore, to understand and protect your legal rights, you should consult your own private lawyer regarding all legal questions.

While every effort was made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the unannotated South Carolina Code available on the South Carolina General Assembly's website, the unannotated South Carolina Code is not official, and the state agencies preparing this website and the General Assembly are not responsible for any errors or omissions which may occur in these files. Only the current published volumes of the South Carolina Code of Laws Annotated and any pertinent acts and joint resolutions contain the official version.

Please note that the Legislative Council is not able to respond to individual inquiries regarding research or the features, format, or use of this website. However, you may notify Legislative Printing, Information and Technology Systems at LPITS@scstatehouse.gov regarding any apparent errors or omissions in content of Code sections on this website, in which case LPITS will relay the information to appropriate staff members of the South Carolina Legislative Council for investigation.

CHAPTER 5.

 OFFENSES AGAINST CIVIL RIGHTS

**SECTION 16‑5‑10.** Conspiracy against civil rights.

It is unlawful for two or more persons to band or conspire together or go in disguise upon the public highway or upon the premises of another with the intent to injure, oppress, or violate the person or property of a citizen because of his political opinion or his expression or exercise of the same or attempt by any means, measures, or acts to hinder, prevent, or obstruct a citizen in the free exercise and enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the Constitution and laws of the United States or by the Constitution and laws of this State.

A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. A person convicted under this section is ineligible to hold, and disabled from holding, any office of honor, trust, or profit in this State.

**SECTION 16‑5‑20.** Punishment for commission of additional crimes.

If in violating any of the provisions of Section 16‑5‑10 or 16‑5‑50 any other crime, misdemeanor or felony shall be committed, the offender or offenders shall, on conviction thereof, be subjected to such punishment for the same as is attached to such crime, misdemeanor and felony by the existing laws of this State.

**SECTION 16‑5‑30.** Duty and liability of officers.

Any constable, sheriff or magistrate, upon receipt of notice from any person that he has knowledge of an intention or attempt to destroy his property or to collect a mob for that purpose, shall take all legal means necessary for the protection of such property as is attacked or threatened to be attacked, and if such constable, sheriff or magistrate, upon receipt of such notice or upon knowledge of such intention or attempt to destroy such property in any wise received, shall neglect or refuse to perform his duty in the premises, he shall be liable for the damages done to such property, to be recovered by action, and shall also be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor in office and, on conviction thereof, shall forfeit his commission.

**SECTION 16‑5‑40.** Duty of officers to execute warrants.

All sheriffs, constables, and other officers specially empowered shall obey and execute all warrants and other processes issued under the provisions of Sections 16‑5‑10, 16‑5‑20, or 16‑5‑50 and directed to them. If a sheriff, constable, or other officer specially empowered refuses to receive a warrant or other process when tendered to him or neglects or refuses to execute the same, he is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined five hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than three years. Fines collected are for use of citizens deprived of the rights secured by the provisions of this chapter.

Warrants and other processes run with and are executed by officers anywhere within the circuit or county in which they are issued.

**SECTION 16‑5‑50.** Penalty for hindering officers or rescuing prisoners.

Any person who shall (a) hinder, prevent or obstruct any officer or other person charged with the execution of any warrant or other process issued under the provisions of this chapter in arresting any person for whose apprehension such warrant or other process may have been issued, (b) rescue or attempt to rescue such person from the custody of the officer or person or persons lawfully assisting him, as aforesaid, (c) aid, abet or assist any person so arrested, as aforesaid, directly or indirectly, to escape from the custody of the officer or person or persons assisting him, as aforesaid, or (d) harbor or conceal any person for whose arrest a warrant or other process shall have been issued, so as to prevent his discovery and arrest, after notice or knowledge of the fact of the issuing of such warrant or other process, shall, on conviction for any such offense, be subject to a fine of not less than fifty nor more than one thousand dollars or imprisonment for not less than three months nor more than one year, or both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction.

**SECTION 16‑5‑60.** Suits against county for damages to person or property resulting from violation of person’s civil rights.

Any citizen who shall be hindered, prevented or obstructed in the exercise of the rights and privileges secured to him by the Constitution and laws of the United States or by the Constitution and laws of this State or shall be injured in his person or property because of his exercise of the same may claim and prosecute the county in which the offense shall be committed for any damages he shall sustain thereby, and the county shall be responsible for the payment of such damages as the court may award, which shall be paid by the county treasurer of such county on a warrant drawn by the governing body thereof. Such warrant shall be drawn by the governing body as soon as a certified copy of the judgment roll is delivered to them for file in their office.

**SECTION 16‑5‑70.** Indemnity for property destroyed by mob or riot.

When any dwelling house, building or other property, real or personal, shall be destroyed in consequence of any mob or riot it shall be lawful for any person owning or interested in such property to bring a suit against the county in which such property was situated and being for the recovery of such damages as he may have sustained by reason of the destruction thereof. The amount which shall be recovered in such action shall be paid in the manner provided by Section 16‑5‑60.

**SECTION 16‑5‑80.** Damages shall not be recoverable from county when property damage results from plaintiff’s illegal or negligent conduct.

No person shall be entitled to the recovery of such damages if it shall appear that the destruction of his property was caused by his illegal conduct, nor unless it shall appear that he, upon knowledge had of the intention or attempt to destroy his property or to collect a mob for that purpose and sufficient time intervening, gave notice thereof to a constable, sheriff or magistrate of the county in which such property was situated and being.

**SECTION 16‑5‑90.** Preservation of property owner’s right of action against participants in mob or riot resulting in damage to property.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the person whose property is so injured or destroyed from having and maintaining his action against every person engaged or participating in such mob or riot to recover full damages for any injury sustained; provided, however, that no damages shall be recovered by such person against any of such rioters for the same injury for which compensation shall be made by the county.

**SECTION 16‑5‑100.** Jurisdiction of circuit courts.

The circuit courts of this State within their respective circuits in the counties of which the circuits are respectively composed shall have cognizance of all actions arising under the provisions of Sections 16‑5‑30, 16‑5‑70 and 16‑5‑110.

**SECTION 16‑5‑110.** County’s right of action against participants in mob or riot resulting in county’s liability for damages to property.

The governing body of the county against which damages shall be recovered under the provisions of this chapter may bring suit in the name of the county against any and all persons engaged or in any manner participating in any such mob or riot and against any constable, sheriff, magistrate or other officer charged with the maintenance of the public peace who may be liable, by neglect of duty, to the provisions of this chapter for the recovery of all damages, costs and expenses incurred by the county and such suits shall not abate or fail by reason of too many or too few parties defendant being named therein.

**SECTION 16‑5‑120.** Penalty for engaging in riot where weapon was not used.

Any person, upon conviction of engaging in a riot, rout or affray when no weapon was actually used and no wound inflicted shall be subject and liable for each offense to a fine not to exceed one hundred dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding thirty days.

**SECTION 16‑5‑130.** Penalties for instigating, aiding or participating in riot.

A person who is convicted of riot, or of participating in a riot, either by being personally present, or by instigating, promoting, or aiding the same, is guilty of a:

(1) felony and must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than one thousand dollars, or both, if the purpose of the assembly, or of the acts done or threatened or intended by the persons engaged, is to resist the enforcement of a statute of this State, or of the United States, or to obstruct any public officer of this State, or of the United States, in serving or executing any process or other mandate of a court of competent jurisdiction, or in the performance of any other duty; or if the offender carries, at the time of the riot, firearms, or any other dangerous weapon, or is disguised;

(2) misdemeanor and must be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than five hundred dollars, or both, if the offender directs, advises, encourages, or solicits other persons, present or participating in the riot or assembly, to acts of force or violence;

(3) misdemeanor and must be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than two hundred and fifty dollars, or both, in any case, not embraced within the foregoing subdivisions of this section.

This section must not be construed to prevent the peaceable assembling of persons for lawful purposes of protest or petition.

**SECTION 16‑5‑140.** Enforcement of chapter.

Sheriffs, constables and other officers in the several circuits or counties vested with powers of arresting, imprisoning and bailing offenders against the laws of this State shall institute proceedings against every person who shall violate the provisions of this chapter and cause them to be arrested, imprisoned or bailed, as the case may require, for a trial before such court as shall have jurisdiction of the offense.