

=====
LC005022
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- ARREST

Introduced By: Representative Matthew S. Dawson

Date Introduced: February 06, 2026

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 12-7-21 of the General Laws in Chapter 12-7 entitled "Arrest" is
2 hereby amended to read as follows:
- 3 **12-7-21. "Peace officer" defined.**
- 4 "Peace officer," as used within this chapter, means the following individuals or members
5 of:
- 6 (1) Rhode Island state police;
- 7 (2) Any member of a municipal or local police department;
- 8 (3) Rhode Island airport corporation police;
- 9 (4) Rhode Island park police;
- 10 (5) Rhode Island capitol police;
- 11 (6) Rhode Island conservation officers;
- 12 (7) Rhode Island department of environmental management officers;
- 13 (8) Rhode Island fire marshals;
- 14 (9) Brown University police officers;
- 15 (10) University of Rhode Island campus police officers;
- 16 (11) Rhode Island College campus security;
- 17 (12) Campus security at the Community College of Rhode Island;
- 18 (13) Rhode Island sheriff's department;
- 19 (14) The investigators of the department of attorney general appointed pursuant to § 42-9-

1 8.1;

2 (15) Any federal law enforcement officer;

3 (16) Correctional investigators, chief inspector and inspectors within the office of

4 inspections, and correctional officers of the Rhode Island department of corrections;

5 (17) The witness protection coordinator of the department of attorney general;

6 (18) The warden, associate wardens, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, correctional

7 officers and investigators employed by a project operated by a municipal detention facility

8 corporation, including, but not limited to, the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility; provided, such

9 parties listed in this subsection (18) herein shall be deemed to be peace officers while in

10 performance of their duties for the municipal detention facility only, and shall not be deemed to be

11 peace officers at any time when they are not in performance of said duties;

12 (19) Retired non-permanent sworn members of any municipal police department shall be

13 deemed to be peace officers only while in the performance of their duties for any municipal police

14 department, and shall be permitted to carry their firearm while in the performance of their duties

15 for the municipal police department, and shall be subject to in-service training requirements of title

16 42, chapter 28;

17 (20) Auto theft investigators appointed pursuant to § 31-50-1;

18 (21) Providence fire department arson investigators; provided, that the arson investigator

19 is a graduate of a police-training academy; ~~and~~

20 (22) Rhode Island School of Design police officers; and

21 (23) Juvenile program workers and shift coordinators of the department of children, youth

22 and families.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====
LC005022
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- ARREST

- 1 This act would expand the definition of peace officers to include juvenile program workers
- 2 and shift coordinators at the department of youth, children and families.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC005022
=====