

2026 -- S 2276

=====  
LC003977  
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- UNREASONABLE NOISE LEVELS

Introduced By: Senators Burke, Ciccone, Thompson, Appollonio, Pearson, Tikoian, and  
Raptakis  
Date Introduced: January 23, 2026  
Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Sections 11-45.1-1, 11-45.1-2 and 11-45.1-3 of the General Laws in Chapter  
2   11-45.1 entitled "Unreasonable Noise Levels" are hereby repealed.

3           **11-45.1-1. Declaration of policy.**

4           ~~It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to prohibit unreasonable, excessive and~~  
5 ~~annoying noise levels from all sources subject to its police power. At certain levels, low frequency~~  
6 ~~sound (between 100-20 cps) when substantially amplified, often referred to as sub woofer~~  
7 ~~frequency, can be extremely penetrating, disturbing and poses a danger to the health and safety of~~  
8 ~~the individual using equipment creating the sound, and to other individuals in the immediate area~~  
9 ~~from which the sound is being generated. The noise being generated may originate from radios,~~  
10 ~~CD players, DVD players, tape players, televisions and other audio producing equipment.~~

11           **11-45.1-2. Violations of acceptable noise levels.**

12           ~~It shall be unlawful for any person to operate any equipment as set forth in § 11-45.1-1~~  
13 ~~from which the sound created by this equipment is capable of penetrating a closed vehicle from~~  
14 ~~twenty (20) feet away from the location at which the sound is being generated, or heard from one~~  
15 ~~hundred (100) feet away by a person outside from which the sound is originating. This section shall~~  
16 ~~include, but not be limited to, sound electronically generated by autos, trucks, motor homes, mobile~~  
17 ~~homes, houses, apartment buildings, condominiums, commercial buildings, or from any type of~~  
18 ~~portable sound producing equipment that can be carried or placed outdoors which through its~~  
19 ~~operation exceeds the provision of this chapter. All state and municipal vehicles shall be exempt~~

1 ~~from the provisions of this chapter, nor any person firm, corporation or other legal entity which~~  
2 ~~holds a valid state or municipal entertainment license to sponsor a parade, carnival or other similar~~  
3 ~~special event.~~

4 **11-45.1-3. Penalties.**

5 ~~Any person who violates the provisions of this chapter shall, upon conviction, be subject~~  
6 ~~to a fine in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) for a first offense, two hundred dollars (\$200)~~  
7 ~~for a second offense, and three hundred dollars (\$300) for the third and any subsequent offense.~~

8 SECTION 2. Section 45-2-57 of the General Laws in Chapter 45-2 entitled "General  
9 Powers" is hereby amended to read as follows:

10 **45-2-57. ~~Town of Richmond~~—Noise pollution Noise levels.**

11 ~~(a) For the purpose of promoting the public health, safety and general welfare, the town~~  
12 ~~council of the town of Richmond~~ Notwithstanding any provision of the general or public laws to  
13 the contrary, cities and towns shall have the power in accordance with the provisions of this section  
14 to establish by ordinance standards for the control of noise originating within the limits of the city  
15 or town. Without limiting the generality of the aforementioned, such ordinance shall:

16 (1) Establish standards for the control of noise originating within the limits of the city or  
17 town by setting maximum permissible sound levels for various activities and noise sources in order  
18 to protect the public health, safety and general welfare, provided that the regulation of noise from  
19 any particular source has not been preempted by state or federal law or regulation;

20 (2) Regulate noise pollution based on factors including but not limited to the volume of the  
21 noise, the intensity of the noise, whether the nature of the noise is usual or unusual, whether the  
22 origin of the noise is natural or unnatural, the volume and intensity of the background noise, if any,  
23 the proximity of the noise to residential dwellings, the location from which the noise emanates, the  
24 density of inhabitation of the area within which the noise emanates, the time of day or night the  
25 noise occurs, the duration of the noise, whether the noise is recurrent, intermittent or constant, and  
26 whether the noise is produced by a commercial or noncommercial activity;

27 (3) Establish use districts for regulation of noise, establish maximum permissible sound  
28 levels according to receiving land use, and provide that measurement of sound or noise shall be  
29 made with a sound level meter and octave band analyzer meeting the standards prescribed by the  
30 American Standards Association;

31 (4) Include definitions of words, terms and phrases necessary for the enforcement of the  
32 ordinance, and provide that definitions of technical terms not defined in the ordinance shall be  
33 obtained from publications of acoustical terminology issued by American National Standards  
34 Institute or its successor body;

1           (5) Provide that limitations shall not apply to sound from certain sources, including, but  
2 not limited to, emergency vehicles and snow removal equipment;

3           (6) Provide for enforcement by police department and/or by the city or town solicitor, who  
4 may institute an action for injunctive relief together with an action for penalties in the case of  
5 continuing violations;

6           (7) Provide the city or town council with the authority to grant sound variances after a  
7 public hearing, establish criteria for the granting of such variances and providing the city or town  
8 council with the authority to impose conditions on such variances; and

9           (8) Establish penalties for violation consistent with those established by state law for  
10 violation of municipal ordinances, provide the police department with the authority to issue  
11 warnings and cease and desist orders, and provide that each day of noise disturbance shall be  
12 considered a separate offense.

13           (b) Original jurisdiction for enforcement of this section shall be within the municipal court  
14 of the city or town issuing the violation; provided, however, that in the event a city or town does  
15 not maintain a municipal court, original jurisdiction shall be within the Rhode Island traffic  
16 tribunal.

17           SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC003977  
=====

EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- UNREASONABLE NOISE LEVELS

\*\*\*

- 1           This act would repeal the provisions of chapter 45.1 of title 11, regarding unreasonable  
2 noise levels. This act would also provide that cities and towns would have the power to establish,  
3 by ordinance, standards for the control of noise originating within the municipality.  
4           This act would take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC003977  
=====