

Ala. Code 1975, § 13A-6-82

School Employee Having Sexual Contact with a Student Under 19

The defendant is charged with being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years.

A person commits the crime of being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years if he/she is a school employee and engages in sexual contact with a student, regardless of whether the student is male or female.

To convict, the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt each of the following elements:

- (1) The defendant was a school employee;
- (2) **[Insert Victim's name]** was a student under the age of 19 years old;
- (3) The defendant engaged in a sexual contact with **[Insert name of Victim];**
(AND)
- (4) The defendant acted **[Insert appropriate mens rea element - See Use Note]**.

School employee includes a teacher, school administrator, student teacher, safety or resource officer, coach, and other school employee. [13A-6-80]

Sexual contact means any touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of a student, done for the purpose of gratifying the sexual desire of either party. The term includes soliciting or harassing a student to perform a sex act. [13A-6-82(b)]

Consent is no defense to a prosecution for this offense. [13A-6-82(a)]

If you find from the evidence that the State has proved beyond a reasonable doubt each of the above elements of being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years, then you shall find the defendant guilty of being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years.

If you find that the State has failed to prove any one or more of the elements of the offense of being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years, then you cannot find the defendant guilty of being a school employee having sexual contact with a student under the age of 19 years.

[If lesser-included offenses are included, the Court should instruct on those offenses at this point.]

Use Notes

The statute does not state a specific mens rea element. The Court of Criminal Appeals has concluded that "intent" is not an element of sodomy or sexual abuse. *Allen v. State*, 624 So. 2d 650 (Ala. Crim. App. 1993). Moreover, in interpreting the rape in the first degree statute which also does not establish a specific mens rea element, the courts have concluded that rape in the first degree does not include "specific intent" as an element. *Anonymous v. State*, 507 So.2d 972 (Ala. 1987); *Toler v. State*, 623 So. 2d 408 (Ala. Crim. App.), cert. denied, No. 1921231 (Ala. 1993).

Insert the appropriate mens rea element considering the indictment and the evidence before the court. There are few, if any, strict liability offenses in the Code. See Commentary for 13A-2-3 and 13A-2-4(b). There are four mens rea elements in the Alabama Code: intentionally, knowingly, recklessly and with criminal negligence. See 13A-2-2.

1. A person acts *intentionally* with respect to a result or to conduct described by a statute defining an offense when his/her purpose is to cause that result or to engage in that conduct. [13A-2-2(1)]
2. A person acts *knowingly* with respect to conduct or to a circumstance described by a statute defining an offense he/she is aware that his/her conduct is of that nature or that the circumstance exists. [13A-2-2(2)]
3. A person acts *recklessly* with respect to a result or to a circumstance when he/she is aware of and consciously disregards a substantial and unjustifiable risk that the result will occur or that the circumstance exists. The risk must be of such nature and degree that disregard thereof constitutes a gross deviation from the standard of conduct that a reasonable person would observe in the situation. [13A-2-2(3)]

4. A person acts with *criminal negligence* with respect to a result or to a circumstance when he/she fails to perceive a substantial and unjustifiable risk that the result will occur or that the circumstance exists. The risk must be of such nature and degree that the failure to perceive it constitutes a gross deviation from the standard of care that a reasonable person would observe in the situation. A court or jury may consider statutes or ordinances regulating the defendant's conduct as bearing upon the question of criminal negligence. [13A-2-2(4)]

The "marital exemption" for the offense of forced sodomy contained in the statutory definition of deviate sexual intercourse (13A-6-60(2)) was declared unconstitutional and was severed from the definition in *Williams v. State*, 494So. 2d 819 (Ala. Crim. App. 1986). The *Williams* holding seemingly should also apply here, especially given the age restriction. This instruction, therefore, omits the severed statutory language.

[Approved 9-2-15.]