

South Australia

EXPIATION OF OFFENCES ACT 1996

An Act to provide for the expiation of minor offences.

*This Act is reprinted pursuant to the Acts Republication Act 1967 and incorporates all amendments in force as at **17 June 2001**.*

It should be noted that the Act was not revised (for obsolete references, etc.) by the Commissioner of Statute Revision prior to the publication of this reprint.

EXPIATION OF OFFENCES ACT 1996

being

Expiation of Offences Act 1996 No. 27 of 1996
[Assented to 2 May 1996]¹

as amended by

Statutes Amendment (Fine Enforcement) Act 1998 No. 60 of 1998 [Assented to 3 September 1998]²

Motor Vehicles (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 1999 No. 52 of 1999 [Assented to 12 August 1999]³

Statutes Amendment and Repeal (Attorney-General's Portfolio) Act 2000 No. 57 of 2000 [Assented to 20 July 2000]⁴

¹ Came into operation 3 February 1997: *Gaz.* 19 December 1996, p. 1922.

² Part 6 (ss. 31-38) came into operation 6 March 2000: *Gaz.* 18 November 1999, p. 2358.

³ **Section 95 came into operation 17 June 2001: *Gaz.* 7 June 2001, p. 2144.**

⁴ Part 12 (ss. 26 & 27) came into operation 1 October 2000: *Gaz.* 28 September 2000, p. 2221.

N.B. The amendments effected to this Act by the *Expiation of Offences (Trifling Offences) Amendment Act 2001* had not been brought into operation at the date of, and have not been included in, this reprint.

NOTE:

- Asterisks indicate repeal or deletion of text.
- Entries appearing in bold type indicate the amendments incorporated since the last reprint.
- For the legislative history of the Act see Appendix.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

1. Short title
2. Commencement
3. Application of Act
4. Interpretation
5. Certain offences may be expiated
6. Expiation notices
7. Payment by card
8. Alleged offender may elect to be prosecuted
9. Options in cases of hardship
10. Review of cancellation of order for relief
11. Expiation reminder notices
12. Late payment
13. Enforcement procedures
14. Enforcement orders are not subject to appeal but may be reviewed
15. Effect of expiation
16. Withdrawal of expiation notices
17. Application of payments
18. Giving of certain notices and certificates
- 18A. Exercise of Registrar's powers
19. Non-derogation
20. Regulations

**APPENDIX
LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The Parliament of South Australia enacts as follows:

Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the *Expiation of Offences Act 1996*.

Commencement

2. This Act will come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

Application of Act

3. This Act applies only in relation to an expiation notice issued after the commencement of this Act.

Interpretation

4. In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears—

"**child**", in relation to an offence, means a person who was under the age of 16 years at the time the offence is alleged to have been committed;

"**council**" means a council established under the *Local Government Act 1934* and includes a controlling authority established under that Act;

"**Court**" means—

- (a) in relation to an expiation notice issued to a person who was under the age of 18 years at the time of the alleged offence—the Youth Court;
- (b) in relation to any other expiation notice—the Magistrates Court;

"**expiation period**" means the period specified in an expiation notice for payment of the expiation fee;

"**issuing authority**" means—

- (a) if an expiation notice is given by a member of the police force—the Commissioner of Police;
- (b) in any other case—the Minister, statutory authority or council on whose behalf an expiation notice is given;

"**the Manager, Penalty Management**" means the person holding or acting in the office of Manager, Penalty Management under the *Magistrates Court Act 1991*;

"**Registrar**" means—

- (a) in relation to an expiation notice issued to a person who was under the age of 18 years at the time of the alleged offence—Registrar of the Youth Court;
- (b) in relation to any other expiation notice—Registrar as defined in the *Magistrates Court Act 1991*.

Certain offences may be expiated

5. (1) If an expiation fee is fixed by or under an Act, regulation or by-law in respect of an offence, an expiation notice may be given under this Act to a person alleged to have committed the offence and the alleged offence may accordingly be expiated in accordance with this Act.

[Note: *The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978 s. 13(5) provides that an offence is not expiated until the levy imposed by that Act is paid.*]

(2) Subsection (1) applies in relation to offences committed before or after the commencement of this Act.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), a power under an Act to impose a penalty for the contravention of a regulation or by-law will be taken to include the power—

- (a) to provide that an alleged offence against the regulation or by-law may be expiated in accordance with this Act; and
- (b) to fix for that purpose an expiation fee not exceeding—
 - (i) if the maximum fine prescribed for the offence is expressed as a divisional fine—a divisional expiation fee of the same division; or
 - (ii) in any other case—
 - (A) \$315; or
 - (B) 25% of the maximum fine prescribed for the offence,
 whichever is the lesser.

(4) An offence against a regulation or by-law that is an offence involving violence is not and cannot be, despite subsection (3) or the provisions of any other Act, an expiable offence.

[Note: *Various other Acts (e.g., the Controlled Substances Act 1984) provide that certain offences may be expiated in accordance with this Act.*

- *Section 28A of the Acts Interpretation Act 1915 sets out a scale of divisional expiation fees for use when an expiation fee is expressed as a divisional fee (i.e., not in dollars).*]

Expiation notices

6. (1) An expiation notice—

- (a) may relate to up to 3 alleged offences arising out of the same incident (i.e., if they are committed contemporaneously, or in succession, one following immediately upon another); and
- (b) must be in the prescribed form; and
- (c) must specify that the expiation fee is to be paid within 28 days from (and including) the date of the notice; and
- (d) must specify to whom the expiation fee is payable; and

- (e) cannot be given after the expiry of the period of 6 months from the date on which the offence was, or offences were, alleged to have been committed; and
- (f) cannot be given to a person if a prosecution has been commenced against the person for the alleged offence or offences; and
- (g) cannot (except where some other Act provides otherwise) be given to a child; and
- (h) cannot, if the regulations or some other Act so provides in relation to a particular offence, be given to a person under the age of 18 years; and
- (i) if a vehicle is involved in the commission of the alleged offence or offences and is found unattended—may be addressed to the owner or driver of the vehicle without naming or otherwise identifying him or her; and
- (j) may be given—
 - (i) personally or by service on an employee or agent of the alleged offender; or
 - (ii) by post addressed to the alleged offender's last known place of business or residence; or
 - (iii) if a vehicle is involved in the commission of the alleged offence or offences and is found unattended—by affixing or placing the notice on that vehicle; and
- (k) must be accompanied by a notice in the prescribed form by which the alleged offender may elect to be prosecuted for the offence or any of the offences to which the expiation notice relates.

[Note: Certain other Acts (e.g., the Local Government Act 1934 s. 789D and the Road Traffic Act 1961 s. 174A) require that an expiation notice given to the registered owner of a motor vehicle must be accompanied by a notice relating to the question of whether the owner was the driver at the time of the alleged offence.]

(2) If an expiation notice is served on an employee or agent of the alleged offender, the employee or agent must, as soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving the notice, give the notice to his or her employer or principal.

Maximum penalty: \$50.

- (3) An expiation notice may only be given by—
 - (a) a member of the police force; or
 - (b) a person who is authorised in writing by—
 - (i) the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act against which the offence is alleged to have been committed; or
 - (ii) the statutory authority or council responsible for the enforcement of the provision against which the offence is alleged to have been committed,
- to give expiation notices for the alleged offence; or

(c) a person who is authorised to give expiation notices for the alleged offence by or under the Act against which the offence is alleged to have been committed.

(4) If an officer or employee of a council is authorised by or under an Act to exercise powers as an inspector (or other authorised person) for the purposes of the enforcement of a provision of that Act, the officer or employee—

(a) is authorised to give an expiation notice for an alleged offence against that provision; and

(b) in giving such a notice, will be taken to be doing so on behalf of the council.

(5) If an expiation notice is given to an alleged offender, no further expiation notice can be given to that person in respect of any other alleged expiable offence arising out of the same incident, except in the following circumstances:

- if the expiation notice already given to the alleged offender relates to an offence, or offences, against the *Road Traffic Act 1961* or the *Motor Vehicles Act 1959*, a further expiation notice may be given to him or her in respect of an alleged offence against section 74, 75A, 81, 81A or 81AB of the *Motor Vehicles Act 1959*.

Payment by card

7. Any amount payable under an expiation notice may be paid by using a credit card, charge card or debit card, if facilities for their use are available at the place at which the payment is to be made.

Alleged offender may elect to be prosecuted

8. (1) An alleged offender may, by notice in the prescribed form given personally or by post to the issuing authority, elect to be prosecuted for the offence or any of the offences to which the expiation notice relates.

(2) An election to be prosecuted for an offence cannot be made after—

(a) if the alleged offender is granted an order for relief under section 9—the granting of the order;

(b) in any other case—the making of an enforcement order under section 13 in respect of the offence.

(3) If an election is made under this section, the expiation notice will be taken to have been withdrawn in respect of the offence to which the election relates.

Options in cases of hardship

9. (1) A person who has been given an expiation notice may apply to a Registrar for relief under this section.

(2) An application under this section must be in the form approved by the Minister and the information it contains must be verified by statutory declaration.

(3) The Registrar is not obliged to conduct an inquiry on the application, but may require the applicant to provide further information or records.

(4) If the Registrar is satisfied that the applicant or his or her dependants would suffer hardship if the expiation fee under the notice were to be paid in full, the Registrar may make an order permitting the applicant—

- (a) to pay the fee to the Registrar in instalments; or
- (b) an extension of time (not exceeding 6 months) within which to pay the fee.

(5) For the purposes of making an order under this section, the Registrar may aggregate the fees under any number of expiation notices given to the alleged offender, whether by the same issuing authority or not.

(6) The Registrar—

- (a) cannot make an order for relief if an enforcement order has been made under this Act in respect of the expiation notice; and
- (b) cannot make an order for payment by instalments if the amount of the expiation fee (or the total amount of fees when aggregated) is less than \$50; and
- (c) should not grant an extension of time to pay if the alleged offender is, without the offender or his or her dependants suffering hardship, able to pay the due amount in instalments of a reasonable amount.

* * * * *

(9) The Registrar must, on making a decision on an application for relief—

- (a) give the applicant, personally or by post, written notice of the decision; and
- (b) if an order for relief is made, give written notice of the order to the relevant issuing authority.

(10) A decision of a Registrar made on an application for relief is not subject to appeal.

(11) An order under this section remains in force until discharged or cancelled, despite the fact that the time for commencement of a prosecution for the offence or offences to which the order relates has expired.

(12) If a person contravenes or fails to comply with an order under this section, a Registrar may, by notice in writing given personally or by post to that person, cancel the order.

(13) If an order for payment of an amount in instalments is cancelled, the whole of the balance of the amount becomes liable to enforcement action under this Act.

(14) The Registrar must give written notice of the cancellation to the relevant issuing authority.

(15) If a person complies with an order for payment in instalments, or pays to a Registrar at any time the amount then outstanding, the order is discharged and the offence, or offences, to which it related will be taken to be expiated.

[Note: *The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978 s. 13(5) provides that an offence is not expiated until the levy imposed by that Act is paid.*]

* * * * *

(17) A Registrar must give written notice of the discharge of an order under this section to the relevant issuing authority.

* * * * *

Review of cancellation of order for relief

10. (1) A decision of the Registrar to cancel an order for relief is not subject to appeal, but the person the subject of the order may apply to the Court for a review of the decision within 30 days of being given notice of the cancellation.

(2) The Court may entertain an application made out of time if it thinks that good reason exists for doing so.

(3) The Court is not obliged to conduct an inquiry on the application, but may require the applicant to provide further information or records.

(4) The Court, after reviewing the decision of the Registrar, may—

- (a) confirm the decision;
- (b) revoke the decision;
- (c) make any ancillary order.

(5) A decision of the Court made on a review is not subject to appeal.

Expiation reminder notices

11. (1) If, by the end of the expiation period, an alleged offender has neither paid the expiation fee nor been granted relief under this Act, the issuing authority must, before it takes any action under this Act to enforce the expiation notice, send an expiation reminder notice, in the prescribed form, to the alleged offender by post.

[Note: Certain other Acts and regulations (e.g., the Local Government Act 1934 s. 789D and the Road Traffic Act 1961 s. 174A) require that the expiation reminder notice sent to the registered owner of a motor vehicle must be accompanied by a notice relating to the question of whether the owner was the driver at the time of the alleged offence.]

(2) No enforcement action can be taken under this Act in respect of an expiation notice until 14 clear days have elapsed from the date of the reminder notice.

(3) If a reminder notice is given to an alleged offender, the prescribed reminder notice fee will be added to the unpaid expiation fee and, for the purposes of this Act, forms part of that fee.

(4) The prescribed reminder notice fee may consist of two components—

- (a) one being a prescribed amount payable in every case; and
- (b) the other being an amount attributable to costs and expenses of a prescribed class (if any) incurred in relation to the matter.

Late payment

12. The issuing authority may accept late payment of an expiation fee (together with the levy under the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978*) at any time before an enforcement order is made under this Act.

Enforcement procedures

13. (1) An expiation notice may be enforced against the alleged offender by the issuing authority by sending to the Registrar a certificate that contains the prescribed particulars relating to—

- (a) the alleged offender; and
- (b) the offence or offences that remain unexpiated; and
- (c) the amount payable under the notice; and
- (d) compliance by the authority with the requirements of this Act and any other Act.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a Registrar may make an order against a person for enforcement of an expiation notice if the Registrar—

- (a) has received a certificate under subsection (1); or
- (b) has cancelled an order for relief.

(3) The Registrar—

- (a) cannot make an order pursuant to subsection (2)(a) if the time for commencement of a prosecution against the person for the unexpiated offence or offences has expired; but
- (b) may make an order pursuant to subsection (2)(b) despite the fact that the time for commencement of a prosecution against the person for the unexpiated offence or offences has expired, provided that the enforcement order is made—
 - (i) within 30 days of the cancellation; or
 - (ii) if an application for review of the cancellation has been lodged—within 30 days of the application being dismissed or withdrawn.

(4) A Registrar is not required to conduct a hearing for the purposes of making an enforcement order.

(5) The costs of making an enforcement order will be included in the order.

(6) On an enforcement order being made—

- (a) the alleged offender will be taken to have been convicted by the Court on that day of the offence or offences to which the order relates; and
- (b) the order will be taken to be an order of the Court imposing a fine of an amount equivalent to the unpaid expiation fee and is enforceable under the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988* accordingly; and
- (c) the Registrar must cause a copy of the order to be given personally or by post to the alleged offender.

Enforcement orders are not subject to appeal but may be reviewed

14. (1) An enforcement order is not subject to appeal, but the person liable under the order may apply to the Court for a review of the order within 30 days of being given notice of the order.

(2) The Court may entertain an application made out of time if it thinks good reason exists for doing so.

(3) An application can only be made on the ground that—

(a) the expiation notice should not have been given to the applicant in the first instance; or

(b) the procedural requirements of this Act or any other Act were not complied with; or

(c) the applicant failed to receive a notice required by this Act or any other Act; or

(ca) the issuing authority failed to receive—

(i) a notice sent to the authority by the applicant electing to be prosecuted for the offence; or

(ii) a statutory declaration or other document sent to the authority by the applicant in accordance with a notice required by law to accompany the expiation notice or expiation reminder notice; or

(d) the applicant has expiated the offence, or offences, under the notice; or

(e) the amount shown as due under the order has not taken into account the payment of an instalment.

(4) The Court, after conducting a review of an enforcement order, may—

(a) confirm the order;

(b) vary or revoke the order;

(c) make any ancillary order.

(5) If the Court revokes an enforcement order, any subsequent order made under Division 3 of Part 9 of the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988* will be taken to have been revoked.

(5a) Despite any other provision of this Act, if the Court revokes an enforcement order on a ground referred to in subsection (3)(b), (c) or (ca), the following provisions apply:

(a) if the period of 1 year from the date of commission of the alleged offence, or offences, has not expired, the applicant will be taken to have been given an expiation notice by the issuing authority in respect of the alleged offence, or offences, for the first time on the day on which the order was revoked; and

(b) the expiation notice will also be taken to have been issued on that day; and

(c) the time within which a prosecution can be commenced for the alleged offence, or offences, will (for the purposes of this Act or any other Act) accordingly be taken to run from that day despite the fact that it may have already otherwise expired.

(6) A decision of the Court made on a review of an enforcement order is not subject to appeal by the person liable under the order (but nothing in this section affects the person's right of appeal against the conviction of the offence or offences to which the order relates).

Effect of expiation

15. (1) Subject to this Act, if the offence, or offences, to which an expiation notice relates are expiated in accordance with this Act, the alleged offender is not liable to prosecution for that offence or those offences or any other expiable offence arising out of the same incident.

(2) Subject to this Act, if an expiation notice is given in respect of an offence, or offences, arising out of the use of a motor vehicle and that offence, or those offences, are expiated in accordance with this Act, no person is liable to prosecution for that offence, or those offences, or any other expiable offence arising out of the same incident except for an offence that is the subject of another expiation notice.

[Note: · *The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1978 s. 13(5) provides that an offence is not expiated until the levy imposed by that Act is paid.*

· *Section 6(5) of this Act provides for the giving of further expiation notices for offences arising out of the same incident in certain circumstances.]*

(3) If—

(a) an expiation notice relates to more than one offence; and

(b) the alleged offender expiates one or more of those offences but not all of them,

the alleged offender is liable to prosecution for any offence that is not expiated.

(4) The expiation of an offence under this Act (or an application for relief under this Act)—

(a) does not constitute an admission of guilt or of any civil liability; and

(b) will not be regarded as evidence tending to establish guilt or any civil liability; and

(c) cannot be referred to in any report furnished to a court for the purposes of determining sentence for any offence.

(5) However, if anything seized under an Act in connection with the alleged offence would be liable to forfeiture in the event of a conviction, that thing is, on expiation of the alleged offence under this Act, forfeited to the Crown.

Withdrawal of expiation notices

16. (1) The issuing authority may withdraw an expiation notice with respect to all or any of the alleged offences to which the notice relates if—

(a) the authority is of the opinion that the notice should not have been given with respect to the offence, or offences; or

(b) the authority decides that the alleged offender should be prosecuted for the offence, or offences.

(2) An expiation notice may be withdrawn under subsection (1) despite payment of an expiation fee or an instalment, but in that event the amount paid must be refunded.

(3) However, an expiation notice cannot be withdrawn for the purposes of prosecuting the alleged offender for an offence if—

(a) an enforcement order has been made under this Act in respect of the offence; or

(b) —

- (i) in the case of a notice issued before the commencement of Part 6 of the *Statutes Amendment (Fine Enforcement) Act 1998*—the period of 90 days from the date of the notice has expired;
- (ii) in the case of a notice issued after that commencement—the period of 60 days from the date of the notice has expired.

* * * * *

(5) If an expiation notice is withdrawn under subsection (1), a prosecution for an offence to which the notice related may be commenced, but the fact that the defendant paid an expiation fee or an instalment or applied for relief under this Act is not admissible in those proceedings as evidence against the defendant.

(6) Subject to subsection (7), the issuing authority must withdraw an expiation notice if it becomes apparent that the alleged offender did not receive the notice until after the expiation period, or has never received it, as a result of error on the part of the authority or failure of the postal system.

(7) An expiation notice cannot be withdrawn under subsection (6) if the alleged offender has paid the expiation fee or any instalment or other amount due under the notice.

(8) If an expiation notice is withdrawn under subsection (6)—

- (a) the issuing authority must, if a certificate has been sent to the Court under section 13 for enforcement of the notice, inform the Court of the withdrawal of the notice; and
- (b) any enforcement order made under this Act in respect of the notice and all subsequent orders made under Division 3 of Part 9 of the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988* will be taken to have been revoked; and
- (c) the issuing authority may, if the period of 1 year from the date of commission of the alleged offence, or offences, to which the notice related has not expired, give a fresh expiation notice to the alleged offender; and
- (d) the issuing authority cannot prosecute the alleged offender for an alleged offence to which the withdrawn notice related unless the alleged offender has been given a fresh expiation notice and allowed the opportunity to expiate the offence; and
- (e) the time within which a prosecution can be commenced for an alleged offence to which the fresh expiation notice relates will (for the purposes of this Act or any other Act) be taken to run from the day on which the alleged offender is given that notice, despite the fact that the time for commencement of the prosecution may have already otherwise expired.

(9) The withdrawal of an expiation notice under this section is effected by giving written notice of the withdrawal, personally or by post, to the person to whom the expiation notice was given.

Application of payments

17. (1) Unless a contrary intention is indicated in a particular Act and subject to subsection (2), money received by way of expiation fees will be paid into the Consolidated Account.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a statutory authority or council is entitled to any expiation fee paid under this Act pursuant to an expiation notice, or recovered on enforcement of an expiation notice, that was issued by or on behalf of the authority or council.

(3) If an expiation notice is issued by or on behalf of a statutory authority or council as a result of the reporting of an offence by a member of the police force or other officer of the Crown, half of the amount of any expiation fee paid pursuant to the notice or recovered on enforcement of the notice must be paid into the Consolidated Account.

Giving of certain notices and certificates

18. Where a written notice is to be given under this Act by a Registrar to an issuing authority, or an enforcement certificate is to be sent by an issuing authority to a Registrar, the notice or certificate may be given or sent in an electronic form that is acceptable to the recipient, provided that a printed copy of the notice or certificate can be produced if required.

Exercise of Registrar's powers

18A. (1) The Manager, Penalty Management may direct that powers vested in a Registrar under this Act are exercisable by a person who is an authorised officer under the *Criminal Law (Sentencing) Act 1988*.

(2) A direction under this section—

(a) must be by instrument in writing; and

(b) may be absolute or conditional; and

(c) does not derogate from the power of a Registrar to act in any matter; and

(d) is revocable at will by the Manager.

Non-derogation

19. This Act does not derogate from the provisions of any other Act that relate to the expiation of offences.

Regulations

20. The Governor may make such regulations as are contemplated by this Act, or as are necessary or expedient for the purposes of this Act.

APPENDIX

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Transitional Provisions

(Transitional provision from Statutes Amendment (Fine Enforcement) Act 1998, Sched. Div. 2 cl. 10)

Community service under repealed s. 9(4)(b)

10. If an order for community service made under section 9(4)(b) of the principal Act in respect of a person was in force immediately before the commencement of this Act, the order continues in force and, for that purpose, the principal Act (as in force immediately before the commencement of this Act) continues to apply.

Legislative History

(entries in bold type indicate amendments incorporated since the last reprint)

Section 4:	definition of "the Manager, Penalty Management" inserted by 60, 1998, s. 31
Section 6(1):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 32
Section 6(5):	amended by 52, 1999, s. 95
Section 7:	amended by 60, 1998, s. 33
Section 9(4):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 34(a)
Section 9(6):	substituted by 60, 1998, s. 34(b)
Section 9(7) and (8):	repealed by 60, 1998, s. 34(b)
Section 9(9):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 34(c)
Section 9(16):	repealed by 60, 1998, s. 34(d)
Section 9(18):	repealed by 60, 1998, s. 34(e)
Section 13(1):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 35(a)
Section 13(2):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 35(b)
Section 13(6):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 35(c)
Section 14(3):	amended by 60, 1998, s. 36; 57, 2000, s. 26(a)
Section 14(5):	substituted by 57, 2000, s. 26(b)
Section 14(5a):	inserted by 57, 2000, s. 26(b)
Section 16(2):	amended by 57, 2000, s. 27(a)
Section 16(3):	substituted by 60, 1998, s. 37
Section 16(4):	repealed by 57, 2000, s. 27(b)
Section 16(5):	amended by 57, 2000, s. 27(c)
Section 16(6) - (9):	inserted by 57, 2000, s. 27(d)
Section 18A:	inserted by 60, 1998, s. 38