

**§ 83A-16. Violations of Chapter; penalties.**

(a) Any individual or firm not registered under this Chapter, who shall wrongfully use the title "Architect" or represent himself or herself to the public as an architect, practice architecture as herein defined, present as his or her own the license of another, give false or forged evidence to the Board or any member thereof in obtaining a license, falsely impersonate any other practitioner of like or different name, use or attempt to use a license that has been revoked, or seek to avoid the provisions of this Chapter by the use of any other designation than "Architect": (i) shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor; and (ii) be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per day of such violation. Each day of such unlawful practice shall constitute a distinct and separate violation. The clear proceeds of any civil penalty collected hereunder shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(a1) Any individual or firm not registered under this Chapter, who shall wrongfully use the title "registered interior designer," represent himself or herself to the public as a "registered interior designer," seek to avoid the provisions of this Chapter by the use of any other designation than "registered interior designer," present as his or her own the registration of another, give false or forged evidence to the Board or any member thereof in obtaining a registration, falsely impersonate any other practitioner of like or different name, use or attempt to use a registration that has been revoked, or otherwise violate any of the provisions in this Chapter shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor and be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per day of such violation. Each day of such unlawful practice shall constitute a distinct and separate violation. The clear proceeds of any civil penalty collected hereunder shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(a2) Before imposing and assessing a civil penalty, the Board shall consider the following factors:

- (1) The nature, gravity, and persistence of the particular violation.
- (2) The appropriateness of the imposition of a civil penalty when considered alone or in combination with other punishment.
- (3) Whether the violation was willful and malicious.
- (4) Any other factors that would tend to mitigate or aggravate the violations found to exist.

(b) Actions and prosecutions under this section shall be commenced in the county in which the defendant resides, or has his principal place of business, or in the case of an out-of-state corporation, is conducting business.

(c) Actions to recover civil penalties shall be initiated by the Attorney General, or any private counsel retained under G.S. 114-2.3.

(d) The Board shall establish a schedule of civil penalties for violations of this Chapter and rules adopted by the Board.

(e) The Board may in a disciplinary proceeding charge costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, to the licensee or registered interior designer against whom the proceedings were brought. (1915, c. 270, s. 4; C.S., s. 4996; 1941, c. 369, ss. 1, 2; 1951, c. 1130, s. 3; 1957, c. 794, s. 11; 1965, c. 1100; 1969, c. 718, s. 21; 1973, c. 1414, s. 1; 1979, c. 871, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 595; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1998-215, s. 129; 2021-81, s. 1.)