

**§ 1241. Definitions**

As used in this chapter—

(a) The term “interstate commerce” means commerce between any State, Territory, possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia, and any place outside thereof.

(b) The term “switchblade knife” means any knife having a blade which opens automatically—

- (1) by hand pressure applied to a button or other device in the handle of the knife, or
- (2) by operation of inertia, gravity, or both.

(Pub. L. 85-623, § 1, Aug. 12, 1958, 72 Stat. 562.)

## REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 85-623, which enacted sections 1241 to 1244 of this title and amended section 1716 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

## EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 6 of Pub. L. 85-623 provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter and amending section 1716 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure] shall take effect on the sixtieth day after the date of its enactment [Aug. 12, 1958].”

## SHORT TITLE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 99-570, title X, § 10001, Oct. 27, 1986, 100 Stat. 3207-166, provided that: “This title [enacting section 1245 of this title, amending section 1716 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 1245 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Ballistic Knife Prohibition Act of 1986’.”

**§ 1242. Introduction, manufacture for introduction, transportation or distribution in interstate commerce; penalty**

Whoever knowingly introduces, or manufactures for introduction, into interstate commerce, or transports or distributes in interstate commerce, any switchblade knife, shall be fined not more than \$2,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(Pub. L. 85-623, § 2, Aug. 12, 1958, 72 Stat. 562.)

## SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in section 1244 of this title.

**§ 1243. Manufacture, sale, or possession within specific jurisdictions; penalty**

Whoever, within any Territory or possession of the United States, within Indian country (as defined in section 1151 of title 18), or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States (as defined in section 7 of title 18), manufactures, sells, or possesses any switchblade knife, shall be fined not more than \$2,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(Pub. L. 85-623, § 3, Aug. 12, 1958, 72 Stat. 562.)

## SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in section 1244 of this title.

**§ 1244. Exceptions**

Sections 1242 and 1243 of this title shall not apply to—

- (1) any common carrier or contract carrier, with respect to any switchblade knife shipped,

transported, or delivered for shipment in interstate commerce in the ordinary course of business;

(2) the manufacture, sale, transportation, distribution, possession, or introduction into interstate commerce, of switchblade knives pursuant to contract with the Armed Forces;

(3) the Armed Forces or any member or employee thereof acting in the performance of his duty; or

(4) the possession, and transportation upon his person, of any switchblade knife with a blade three inches or less in length by any individual who has only one arm.

(Pub. L. 85-623, § 4, Aug. 12, 1958, 72 Stat. 562.)

## SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in section 1245 of this title.

**§ 1245. Ballistic knives****(a) Prohibition and penalties for possession, manufacture, sale, or importation**

Whoever in or affecting interstate commerce, within any Territory or possession of the United States, within Indian country (as defined in section 1151 of title 18), or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States (as defined in section 7 of title 18), knowingly possesses, manufactures, sells, or imports a ballistic knife shall be fined as provided in title 18, or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

**(b) Prohibition and penalties for possession or use during commission of Federal crime of violence**

Whoever possesses or uses a ballistic knife in the commission of a Federal crime of violence shall be fined as provided in title 18, or imprisoned not less than five years and not more than ten years, or both.

**(c) Exceptions**

The exceptions provided in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of section 1244 of this title with respect to switchblade knives shall apply to ballistic knives under subsection (a) of this section.

**(d) “Ballistic knife” defined**

As used in this section, the term “ballistic knife” means a knife with a detachable blade that is propelled by a spring-operated mechanism.

(Pub. L. 85-623, § 7, as added Pub. L. 99-570, title X, § 10002, Oct. 27, 1986, 100 Stat. 3207-167; amended Pub. L. 100-690, title VI, § 6472, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4379.)

## AMENDMENTS

1988—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 100-690, § 6472(1), substituted “in or affecting interstate commerce, within any Territory or possession of the United States, within Indian country (as defined in section 1151 of title 18), or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States (as defined in section 7 of title 18), knowingly possesses, manufactures, sells, or imports” for “knowingly possesses, manufactures, sells, or imports”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 100-690, § 6472(2), struck out “or State” after “Federal”.

## EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 10004 of Pub. L. 99-570 provided that: “The amendments made by this title [enacting this section,