CHAPTER 17

Crimes of False Accusation

- Promulgated on April 24, 2009. Effective on July 1, 2009.
- Amended on December 6, 2021. Effective on March 1, 2022.
- Amended on April 24, 2023. Effective on July 1, 2023.
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This guideline applies to adult offenders (nineteen years of age or older) who committed any offenses of False Accusation (Criminal Act, Article 156), or the offense of False Accusation as prescribed in the Act on the Aggravated Punishment of Specific Crimes (Act on the Aggravated Punishment of Specific Crimes, Article 14).

PART A

TYPES OF OFFENSES AND SENTENCING RANGE

TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	MITIGATED SENTENCING RANGE	STANDARD SENTENCING RANGE	AGGRAVATED SENTENCING RANGE
1	General False Accusation	– 1 yr.	6 mos. – 2 yrs.	1 yr. – 4 yrs.
2	False Accusation under the Act on the Aggravated Punishment of Specific Crimes	1 yr. – 3 yrs.	2 yrs. – 4 yrs.	3 yrs. – 6 yrs.

CLASSIFICATION		MITIGATING FACTOR	AGGRAVATING FACTOR
Special Sentencing Factor	Conduct	• Participation resulting from outside pressure or threat by another person • Consent by the falsely accused	• Repeated accusations not constituting concurrent offense • Causes serious harm • Instigating the subordinate to commit the offense
	Offender /Etc.	• Hearing and/or speech disabilities • Diminished mental capacity • Voluntary surrender to investigative authorities or confession	• Same-offense recidivism within the statutory recidivism period (including evidence tampering, harboring a criminal, perjury, or etc.)
General Sentencing Factor	Conduct	• Minor participation • Extenuating motives for the offense	• Allegation of multiple false facts
	Offender /Etc.	• Sincere remorse • No prior criminal convictions • Victim expresses intent of non-punishment or substantial restitution was made to the victim	• Different-offense recidivism within the statutory recidivism period. Prior convictions for the same-offense, which do not constitute statutory recidivism (including evidence tampering, harboring a criminal, perjury, or etc.) • Causing harm in the course of attempted settlement (excluding cases where separate crimes such as coercion are established)

DEFINITION OF OFFENSES

1. TYPE 1 — GENERAL FALSE ACCUSATION

- This means cases where the offender reported false information to a government office or a public officer for the purpose of subjecting another person to criminal measure or disciplinary action prescribed in the Criminal Act, Article 156, and which does not fall within Type 2.

2. TYPE 2 — FALSE ACCUSATION UNDER THE ACT ON THE AGGRAVATED PUNISHMENT OF SPECIFIC CRIMES

- This indicates cases in which the crime of False Accusation (Criminal Act, Article 156) is committed with respect to a criminal act prescribed in Act on the Aggravated Punishment of Specific Crimes.

DEFINITION OF SENTENCING FACTORS

1. CONSENT BY THE FALSELY ACCUSED

- This indicates cases in which the offender reported false information at the request of, or with the consent of the falsely accused person in advance.

2. CAUSING SERIOUS HARM

- This applies where one or more of the following are present:
  - The offense caused the falsely accused to be arrested, convicted, or subject to a disciplinary action
  - The offense causes the falsely accused to be subject to investigation or questioning for a substantial period of time
  - Other cases with comparable factors

3. VOLUNTARY SURRENDER TO INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITIES OR CONFESSION

- Voluntary surrender to investigative authorities can be initiated at any time, but confessions must be made prior to the judgment of the criminal case or the decision of the disciplinary action becomes final.

4. MINOR PARTICIPATION

- This refers to cases in which the nature of participation in the commission of the offense was passive or the offender had a limited role.

5. EXTENUATING MOTIVES FOR THE OFFENSE

- This refers to cases in which one or more of the following factors apply:
  - Where the offender, having suffered certain harm from the falsely accused or a person related to the falsely accused, filed a false accusation that went beyond merely exaggerating the harm
  - Other considerations that can be taken into account regarding the circumstances that led to the accusation

6. ALLEGATION OF MULTIPLE FALSE FACTS

- This indicates cases in which the offender, by a single act, reported multiple false facts against the same falsely accused person that could suffice as grounds for criminal convictions or disciplinary actions.

7. SINCERE REMORSE

- This indicates cases in which, after examining and assessing the specific circumstances surrounding the offender's admission of the offense and any voluntary efforts made toward victim restitution and/or the prevention of re-offending, the offender is deemed to show genuine remorse for the offense.
- However, this excludes cases where confession is considered as a special mitigating factor.

8. VICTIM EXPRESSES THE INTENT OF NON-PUNISHMENT

- This indicates cases in which the offender shows sincere remorse with genuine efforts to reach a settlement with the victim; the victim or the family of victim (in the case of a deceased victim) fully understands the legal and social implications of opposing punishment and clearly expresses the intent not to seek punishing the offender. However, this should not apply in the following cases:
  - (1) in cases in which the victim or the family of the deceased opposes punishment as a result of *de facto* coercion or deceit by the offender against the victim's will, or
  - (2) where there is no reasonable or convincing basis for the victim or their legal representative to express no desire for punishment.
- This applies only to cases in which, upon careful and thorough examination and assessment of the victim's or legal representative's age, intelligence, and ability to fully understand the meaning, content, and legal implications of expressing an intent not to seek punishment, it is determined that such expression is both informed and genuine.

9. SUBSTANTIAL RESTITUTION TO THE VICTIM

- This refers to cases in which the offender, through genuine and sustained efforts, has restored the damages to a degree comparable to a formal settlement or in which restitution of such degree is reasonably assured.
- In the case of a deposit, this applies only where it amounts to substantial recovery of damages, as determined through careful examination of the following: the opinion of the victim or the victim's legal representative (in case of a deceased victim, this includes the spouse, lineal relatives, and siblings); whether the defendant is able by law to recover the deposited money or is likely to do so; and the nature of the legal interest harmed and the scale and degree of the damage.

10. CAUSING HARM IN THE COURSE OF ATTEMPTED SETTLEMENT (EXCLUDING CASES WHERE SEPARATE CRIMES SUCH AS COERCION ARE ESTABLISHED)

- This indicates cases in which harm is inflicted by persistently harassing the victim, by applying undue pressure by suggesting tangible or intangible disadvantages for refusing the settlement, or by using other equivalent methods, in the course of attempting settlement.

11. NO PRIOR CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

- This indicates cases in which, the defendant has never committed a crime even once prior to the relevant offense. However, this excludes cases targeting unspecified victims or multiple victims, or cases where crimes were committed repeatedly over a prolonged period.

PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO SENTENCING FACTORS

1 DETERMINING THE SENTENCING RANGE

- When determining the appropriate sentencing range, judges must consider only the Special Sentencing Factors.
- However, where multiple Special Sentencing Factors are present, the applicable sentencing range shall be determined after assessing the factors in accordance with the following principles:
  - ❶ Greater weight is accorded to Conduct Factors than to Offender/Etc. Factors of equal number.
  - ❷ Conduct Factors *inter se*, and Offender/Etc. Factors *inter se*, shall be treated as equivalent.
  - ❸ If the sentencing range applicable cannot be determined by the aforementioned principles in ❶ and ❷, judges are to decide the sentencing range by a comprehensive comparison and assessment of Special Sentencing Factors based on the principles set forth in ❶ and ❷.
- After the assessment of sentencing factors, where aggravating factors outweigh mitigating factors, the aggravating sentencing range is recommended; where mitigating factors outweigh aggravating factors, the mitigating sentencing range is recommended; and in all other cases, the standard sentencing range is recommended.

2 DETERMINING THE SENTENCE TO BE IMPOSED

- The sentence to be imposed shall be determined within the sentencing range established under paragraph 1 above, by comprehensively taking into account both General Sentencing Factors and Special Sentencing Factors.

GENERAL APPLICATION PRINCIPLES

1 SPECIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE RECOMMENDED SENTENCING RANGE

❶ After the assessment of Special Sentencing Factors, if a case falls within the Aggravating Sentencing Range and either i) two or more Special Aggravating Factors exist alone, or ii) Special Aggravating Factors outnumber Special Mitigating Factors by two or more, the upper limit of the recommended sentencing range may be increased by up to 1/2.

❷ After the assessment of Special Sentencing Factors, if a case falls within the Mitigating Sentencing Range and either i) two or more Special Mitigating Factors exist alone, or ii) Special Mitigating Factors outnumber Special Aggravating Factors by two or more, the lower limit of the recommended sentencing range may be reduced by up to 1/2.

2 RELATION BETWEEN THE RECOMMENDED SENTENCING RANGE UNDER THE SENTENCING GUIDELINES AND THE APPLICABLE SENTENCING RANGE BY LAW

- Where the sentencing range recommended under this guideline conflicts with the statutory applicable aggravated/mitigated sentencing range, the upper or lower limit of the applicable sentencing range by law shall govern.

3 APPLICATION OF DISCRETIONARY MITIGATING FACTORS BY LAW

- Where a judge declines to apply discretionary statutory mitigating factors listed in the Sentencing Factor Table of this guideline, such factors shall be considered as extenuating circumstances among mitigating factors.

GUIDELINES ON SENTENCING MULTIPLE OFFENSES

1 APPLICABLE RANGE

- This section applies to concurrent crimes prescribed in the first part of Article 37 of the Criminal Act. However, when concurrent crimes under the first part of Article 37 of the Criminal Act include both an offense set forth in the sentencing guidelines and an offense not covered by the sentencing guidelines, then the minimum level should be the minimum of the sentencing range of the offense that is set forth in this sentencing guideline.

2 DETERMINING THE BASE OFFENSE

- The "base offense" refers to the offense subject to the most severe punishment after selecting the type of punishment and applying any statutory aggravation and/or mitigation thereto. However, where the upper end of the sentencing range under the sentencing guidelines for an offense covered by this chapter is lower than the upper end of the sentencing range under the sentencing guidelines for the other concurrent offense, the other concurrent offense shall become the base offense.

3 DETERMINING THE SENTENCING RANGE FOR THE CONCURRENT MULTIPLE OFFENSES

- Except for concurrent offenses that are treated as a single offense under the sentencing guidelines, the following method of aggravation for multiple offenses shall apply:
  - ❶ For multiple offenses involving two offenses, the upper end of the sentencing range shall be determined by adding 1/2 of the upper end of the sentencing range of the other offense to the upper end of the sentencing range of the base offense.

❷ For multiple offenses involving three or more offenses, the upper end of the sentencing range shall be determined by adding the following three figures: (1) the upper end of the sentencing range of the base offense, (2) 1/2 of the upper end of the sentencing range of the offense with the highest sentencing range among the other offenses, and (3) 1/3 of the upper end of the sentencing range of the offense with the second highest sentencing range among the other offenses.

❸ For multiple offenses where the lower end of the sentencing range of the other offense is higher than the lower end of the sentencing range of the base offense, the lower end of the sentencing range after applying the method of aggravation for multiple offenses shall be the lower end of the sentencing range of the other offense.

PART B

GUIDELINE ON SUSPENDING A SENTENCE

CLASSIFICATION	ADVERSE	AFFIRMATIVE
Primary Circumstance	• Prior convictions for the same-offense [a suspended sentence of imprisonment or a heavier punishment within the past five years, or three or more fines (including suspended sentences)] • Causing serious harm	• Expresses substantial penitence (including voluntary surrender to investigative authorities, confessions, and the like) • No prior criminal convictions
General Circumstance	• Two or more prior convictions resulting in a suspended sentence of imprisonment without labor or heavier punishment • Leading role as a co-offender • Post-offense evidence tampering or attempt to destroy or conceal evidence • Lack of social/family ties • Absence of efforts to reverse the harm • Causing harm in the course of attempted settlement (excluding cases where separate crimes such as coercion are established)	• Minor participation as a co-offender • Stable social/family ties • No prior convictions resulting in a suspended sentence of imprisonment without labor, or heavier punishment • The offender's physical condition is severely impaired • Cases where detaining the offender would impose excessive hardship on dependent family members • Victim expresses the intent of non-punishment or substantial restitution to the victim

DEFINITIONS OF CIRCUMSTANCES TO CONSIDER WHEN SUSPENDING A SENTENCE

- For identical factors in both Sentencing Factors and the Circumstances for Suspending a Sentence, refer to the definitions set forth in the Definition of Sentencing Factors.
- Calculation of the Period of Prior Criminal Convictions
  - For cases where a suspended sentence of imprisonment or a fine was imposed, the period of a prior conviction is calculated from the date on which the judgment became final to the date of the commission of the offense.
  - For cases where a sentence of imprisonment was executed, the period of a prior conviction is calculated from the date on which the sentence was fully served to the date of the commission of the offense.

PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN SUSPENDING A SENTENCE

- When the recommended sentence is imprisonment with labor and judges decide to suspend execution of the sentence, they must give greater weight to the Primary Circumstances than to the General Circumstances, and the following principles should be considered:
  - ❶ When two or more Primary Affirmative Circumstances exist alone, or when Primary Affirmative Circumstances outnumber Primary Adverse Circumstances by two or more, it is recommended to suspend the sentence.
  - ❷ When two or more Primary Adverse Circumstances exist alone, or when Primary Adverse Circumstances outnumber Primary Affirmative Circumstances by two or more, imprisonment is recommended.
  - ❸ In cases in which ❶ or ❷ apply, but the difference between the number of General Adverse (Affirmative) Circumstances and General Affirmative (Adverse) Circumstances is greater than the difference between the number of Primary Affirmative (Adverse) Circumstances and Primary Adverse (Affirmative) Circumstances, or in cases other than ❶ or ❷, the judges shall decide whether to suspend the sentence after comparing and assessing all the Circumstances comprehensively.[1)]

1) Amended on April 15, 2011