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§5–621.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Drug trafficking crime” means a felony or a conspiracy to commit a felony involving the possession, distribution, manufacture, or importation of a controlled dangerous substance under §§ 5–602 through 5–609 and 5–614 of this subtitle.

(3) “Forfeiting authority” means the office or person designated by agreement between the State’s Attorney for a county and the chief executive officer of the governing body that has jurisdiction over the assets subject to forfeiture.

(b) During and in relation to a drug trafficking crime, a person may not:

(1) possess a firearm under sufficient circumstances to constitute a nexus to the drug trafficking crime; or

(2) use, wear, carry, or transport a firearm.

(c) (1) In addition to the sentence provided for the drug trafficking crime, a person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a felony and on conviction is subject to:

(i) for a first violation, imprisonment for not less than 5 years and not exceeding 20 years; or

(ii) for each subsequent violation, imprisonment for not less than 10 years and not exceeding 20 years.

(2) (i) The court shall impose a minimum sentence of 5 years under paragraph (1)(i) of this subsection.

(ii) The court shall impose a minimum sentence of 10 years under paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection.

(3) (i) A court may not suspend any part of a mandatory minimum sentence.

(ii) Except as provided in § 4-305 of the Correctional Services Article, a person sentenced under this subsection is not eligible for parole.

(iii) A sentence imposed under paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection shall be consecutive to and not concurrent with any other sentence imposed by virtue of the commission of the drug trafficking crime.

(d) (1) (i) In this subsection, “firearm silencer” means a device that is designed for silencing, muffling, or diminishing the report of a firearm.

(ii) “Firearm silencer” includes a combination of parts designed, redesigned, or intended for use in assembling or fabricating a firearm silencer or muffler.

(2) A court shall double the minimum mandatory sentence provided in subsection (c)(1)(ii) of this section if the firearm used during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime is:

- (i) listed in § 4-301 of this article or § 5-101 of the Public Safety Article;
- (ii) a machine gun; or
- (iii) equipped with a firearm silencer.

(e) (1) A firearm or ammunition seized under this section is contraband and shall be forfeited summarily to a forfeiting authority.

(2) Unless otherwise prohibited by law or if forfeiture proceedings have begun, the forfeiting authority shall return the seized property to the owner or possessor within 90 days after the date of seizure if:

- (i) the owner or possessor of the property seized is acquitted; or
- (ii) the charges against the person are dismissed.

(3) Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the forfeiting authority shall return the seized property to the owner or possessor promptly if the State:

- (i) enters a nolle prosequi against the owner or possessor of property seized; and
- (ii) does not charge the person within 90 days after the nolle prosequi is entered.

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