

## Chapter 550

**(Senate Bill 82)**

AN ACT concerning

**Criminal Law – Counterfeiting and Possession of Counterfeit Lease of Real Property – Penalty**

FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person with the intent to defraud another from creating, aiding in the creation of, or possessing a counterfeit lease of real property or rental agreement relating to real property; and generally relating to counterfeiting and possession of a counterfeit lease of real property or counterfeit rental agreement relating to real property.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Criminal Law  
Section 8–601  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Criminal Law**

8–601.

(a) A person, with intent to defraud another, may not counterfeit, cause to be counterfeited, or willingly aid or assist in counterfeiting any:

- (1) bond;
- (2) check;
- (3) deed;
- (4) draft;
- (5) endorsement or assignment of a bond, draft, check, or promissory note;
- (6) entry in an account book or ledger;
- (7) **LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY**;
- (8) letter of credit;

- [(8)] **(9)** negotiable instrument;
- [(9)] **(10)** power of attorney;
- [(10)] **(11)** promissory note;
- [(11)] **(12)** release or discharge for money or property;
- (13) RENTAL AGREEMENT RELATING TO REAL PROPERTY;**
- [(12)] **(14)** title to a motor vehicle;
- [(13)] **(15)** waiver or release of mechanics' lien; or
- [(14)] **(16)** will or codicil.

(b) A person may not knowingly, willfully, and with fraudulent intent possess a counterfeit of any of the items listed in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) (1) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

(2) A person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the prosecution of an alleged violation of this section or for an alleged violation of a crime based on an act that establishes a violation of this section may be commenced in any county in which:

- (1) an element of the crime occurred;
- (2) the deed or other alleged counterfeit instrument is recorded in the county land records, filed with the clerk of the circuit court, or filed with the register of wills;
- (3) the victim resides; or
- (4) if the victim is not an individual, the victim conducts business.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.

**Approved by the Governor, May 12, 2026.**