

**CHAPTER 176****(HB 141)**

AN ACT relating to police radios.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

Section 1. KRS 432.570 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) It shall be unlawful for any person except a member of a police department or police force or an official with written authorization from the head of a department which regularly maintains a police radio system authorized or licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, to have in his or her possession, or in an automobile or other vehicle, or to equip or install in or on any automobile or other vehicle, any mobile radio set or apparatus capable of either receiving or transmitting radio or other messages or signals within the wave length or channel now or which may hereafter be allocated by the Federal Communications Commission, or its successor, for the purpose of police radios, or which may in any way intercept or interfere with the transmission of radio messages by any police or other peace officers. It shall be unlawful for any car, automobile, or other vehicle other than one publicly owned and entitled to an official license plate issued by the state issuing a license for the car, to have, or be equipped with the sets or apparatus even though the car is owned by an officer. This section shall not apply to any automobile or vehicle owned or operated by a member of a sheriff's department authorized by the fiscal court to operate a radio communications system that is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission or other federal agency having the authority to license same. Nothing in this section shall preclude a probation and parole officer employed by the Department of Corrections from carrying on his person or in a private vehicle while conducting his official duties an authorized, state-issued portable radio apparatus capable of transmitting or receiving signals.
- (2) Any person guilty of violating any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars (\$50) and not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500), or imprisonment not exceeding twelve (12) months, or both so fined and imprisoned.
- (3) It shall be the duty of any and all peace officers to seize and hold for evidence any and all equipment had or used in violation of the provisions of this section, and, upon conviction of the person having, equipping or using such equipment, it shall be the duty of the trial court to order such equipment or apparatus destroyed, forfeited, or escheated to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and said property may be ordered destroyed, forfeited, or escheated as above provided without a conviction of the person charged with violating this section.
- (4) Nothing contained in this section shall prohibit the possession of a radio by:
  - (a) An individual who is a retailer or wholesaler and in the ordinary course of his business offers such radios for sale or resale;
  - (b) A commercial or educational radio or television station, licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, at its place of business; or
  - (c) An individual who possesses such a radio, provided it is capable of receiving radio transmissions only and is not capable of sending or transmitting radio messages, at his place of residence; licensed commercial auto towing trucks; newspaper reporters and

photographers; emergency management agency personnel authorized in writing by the director of the division of emergency management (for state personnel) or chief executive of the city or county (for their respective personnel); a person holding a valid license issued by the Federal Communications Commission in the amateur radio service; peace officers authorized in writing by the head of their law enforcement agency, Commonwealth's attorneys and their assistants, county attorneys and their assistants, except that it shall be unlawful to use such radio to facilitate any criminal activity or to avoid apprehension by law enforcement officers. Violation of this section shall, in addition to any other penalty prescribed by law, result in a forfeiture to the local law enforcement agency of such radio.

- (5) *The provisions of this section shall not apply to a paid or volunteer member of a fire department or a paid or volunteer member of a public ambulance service licensed in Kentucky who has been given permission in writing by the chief of the fire department and the chief of each law enforcement agency whose frequency is to be monitored, or the director of the ambulance service and the chief of each law enforcement agency whose frequency is to be monitored, to possess a radio capable of receiving on a frequency allocated to a police department or law enforcement agency, whether the radio is in a vehicle or not.*
- (6) The secretary of the Finance and Administration Cabinet is hereby empowered by issuance of a secretary's order to exempt from the prohibitions and penalties of this section the possession and use of any and all radio communication equipment that he finds is necessary to be owned and used by members of the general public and other nonpolice persons for utilization in the N.O.A.A. weather radio system.

**Approved March 28, 2000**

