

§ 14-51.2. Home, workplace, and motor vehicle protection; presumption of fear of death or serious bodily harm.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Home. – A building or conveyance of any kind, to include its curtilage, whether the building or conveyance is temporary or permanent, mobile or immobile, which has a roof over it, including a tent, and is designed as a temporary or permanent residence.
- (2) Law enforcement officer. – Any person employed or appointed as a full-time, part-time, or auxiliary law enforcement officer, correctional officer, probation officer, post-release supervision officer, or parole officer.
- (3) Motor vehicle. – As defined in G.S. 20-4.01(23).
- (4) Workplace. – A building or conveyance of any kind, whether the building or conveyance is temporary or permanent, mobile or immobile, which has a roof over it, including a tent, which is being used for commercial purposes.

(b) The lawful occupant of a home, motor vehicle, or workplace is presumed to have held a reasonable fear of imminent death or serious bodily harm to himself or herself or another when using defensive force that is intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily harm to another if both of the following apply:

- (1) The person against whom the defensive force was used was in the process of unlawfully and forcefully entering, or had unlawfully and forcibly entered, a home, motor vehicle, or workplace, or if that person had removed or was attempting to remove another against that person's will from the home, motor vehicle, or workplace.
- (2) The person who uses defensive force knew or had reason to believe that an unlawful and forcible entry or unlawful and forcible act was occurring or had occurred.

(c) The presumption set forth in subsection (b) of this section shall be rebuttable and does not apply in any of the following circumstances:

- (1) The person against whom the defensive force is used has the right to be in or is a lawful resident of the home, motor vehicle, or workplace, such as an owner or lessee, and there is not an injunction for protection from domestic violence or a written pretrial supervision order of no contact against that person.
- (2) The person sought to be removed from the home, motor vehicle, or workplace is a child or grandchild or is otherwise in the lawful custody or under the lawful guardianship of the person against whom the defensive force is used.
- (3) The person who uses defensive force is engaged in, attempting to escape from, or using the home, motor vehicle, or workplace to further any criminal offense that involves the use or threat of physical force or violence against any individual.
- (4) The person against whom the defensive force is used is a law enforcement officer or bail bondsman who enters or attempts to enter a home, motor vehicle, or workplace in the lawful performance of his or her official duties, and the officer or bail bondsman identified himself or herself in accordance with any applicable law or the person using force knew or reasonably should have known that the person entering or attempting to enter was a law enforcement officer or bail bondsman in the lawful performance of his or her official duties.

(5) The person against whom the defensive force is used (i) has discontinued all efforts to unlawfully and forcefully enter the home, motor vehicle, or workplace and (ii) has exited the home, motor vehicle, or workplace.

(d) A person who unlawfully and by force enters or attempts to enter a person's home, motor vehicle, or workplace is presumed to be doing so with the intent to commit an unlawful act involving force or violence.

(e) A person who uses force as permitted by this section is justified in using such force and is immune from civil or criminal liability for the use of such force, unless the person against whom force was used is a law enforcement officer or bail bondsman who was lawfully acting in the performance of his or her official duties and the officer or bail bondsman identified himself or herself in accordance with any applicable law or the person using force knew or reasonably should have known that the person was a law enforcement officer or bail bondsman in the lawful performance of his or her official duties.

(f) A lawful occupant within his or her home, motor vehicle, or workplace does not have a duty to retreat from an intruder in the circumstances described in this section.

(g) This section is not intended to repeal or limit any other defense that may exist under the common law. (2011-268, s. 1.)