

Chapter 17

Motions To Dismiss the Charging Paper

§ 17.01 TYPES OF CHALLENGES TO THE CHARGING PAPER; THE STAGES AT WHICH THESE CHALLENGES CAN AND SHOULD BE RAISED

There are numerous grounds for challenging the sufficiency of a charging paper or some of its counts by a motion to dismiss the Petition or those counts. They include:

1. Failure of the Petition to allege facts constituting an offense. (See § 17.03 *infra*.)
2. Lack of jurisdiction to bring the case in the juvenile court, in that the respondent is too old to be prosecuted as a juvenile or too young to be prosecuted at all. (See § 17.04 *infra*.)
3. Failure to allege facts establishing venue. (See § 17.05 *infra*.)
4. Technical defects. (See § 17.06 *infra*.)
5. Expiration of the statute of limitations for the offense. (See § 17.07 *infra*.)
6. Double jeopardy. (See § 17.08 *infra*.)
7. Misjoinder of counts or of respondents. (See Chapter 18.)

In most jurisdictions, statutes or court rules require that motions challenging the sufficiency of the charging paper be made in writing, within a specified period of time (usually 15 or 30 days after arraignment). See § 7.05 *supra*. If the challenge is to the jurisdiction of the court, that challenge may be made at any time.

Even when local procedures require that motions be in writing, a challenge to the sufficiency of the charging paper can be made orally at a detention hearing to prevent detention on an invalid Petition. See § 4.23 *supra*.

§ 17.02 TERMINOLOGY

Under the specialized vocabulary employed in juvenile courts in most jurisdictions, juveniles cannot be “charged” with “crimes” but can merely be “alleged” to have “committed acts, which if committed by an adult, would constitute crimes” and which render the child “delinquent.” Because this terminology is extremely unwieldy, the present chapter will use the words “charges” and “crimes” in discussing the pleading requirements governing Petitions and the sufficiency of their allegations. When practicing in jurisdictions that adhere rigidly to juvenile court parlance, counsel should, of course, substitute the appropriate juvenile court terms.

§ 17.03 FAILURE OF THE CHARGING PAPER TO ALLEGE FACTS CONSTITUTING A CRIME

A Petition (or counts thereof) can be fatally defective by reason of several types of

insufficiency of allegations. These insufficiencies are often confusingly grouped under the single rubric “failure to charge a public offense.”

§ 17.03(a) Failure To Charge Acts That Are Criminal in Nature

The allegations may state fully and clearly what specific acts the respondent is charged with doing, but these acts may be no crime (or, as juvenile parlance would have it, may not be acts “which, if committed by an adult, would constitute a crime”). *See, e.g., State v. Kline*, 717 S.W.2d 849 (Mo. App. 1986); *State v. Miller*, 159 N.C. App. 608, 583 S.E.2d 620 (2003), *aff’d per curiam*, 358 N.C. 133, 591 S.E.2d 520 (2004) (mem.); *State v. Harrison*, 805 S.W.2d 241 (Mo. App. 1991). For example, a respondent may be charged under a statute penalizing one who “resists an officer in the execution of his [or her] duty,” and the Petition may allege that the respondent did “run away and refuse to stop when called upon to stop by” the officer. A motion to dismiss here tests the prosecution’s legal theory. Specifically, it raises the issue of law whether one who runs away from a police officer thereby “resists” the officer within the meaning of the statute.

Ordinarily, the sole focus of this species of motion to dismiss is the text of the charging paper: Do the actions and circumstances which the charging paper sets forth constitute a crime or do they not? However, if there is no dispute between the parties that the factual scenario on which the charge is based includes additional circumstances relevant to the criminality of the actions charged, those circumstances can be considered by the court in ruling on the motion. *See, e.g., State v. Hankins*, 155 So. 3d 1043, 1045-46 (Ala. Crim. App. 2011); *State v. Pagano*, 104 Md. App. 113, 122, 655 A.2d 55, 59-60 (1995), *aff’d*, 341 Md. 129, 669 A.2d 1339 (1996); *State v. Fernow*, 328 S.W.3d 429, 431 (Mo. App. 2010) (the indictment alleged that the defendant “while being held in custody after arrest for burglary, a felony, knowingly escaped from custody” but the facts underlying this allegation, as represented by the parties to the court on the motion to dismiss, were that the defendant “was not in custody after arrest for burglary. At the time . . . [he] absconded, he was being held in custody pursuant to a *capias* warrant issued for his failure to appear at his probation revocation hearing, where burglary was the underlying offense.”). Prosecutors will ordinarily take the position that consideration of any factual information outside the four corners of the charging paper is improper on a motion to dismiss. But where there is no genuine factual debate about what happened when and where, and under what circumstances – so that the only real contest between the prosecution and defense is whether a set of agreed-upon events comes within the terms of a criminal statute – defense counsel can sometimes persuade the prosecutor to stipulate to the specifics of those events as the basis for a ruling on the motion, in order to save the State the cost and trouble of a trial.

Counsel should always check the caselaw to determine whether the courts have previously dealt with the kinds of acts with which the respondent is charged or equivalent acts. Frequently, prosecutors will charge respondents with acts that have previously been deemed insufficient to constitute a crime because the prosecutor is not aware of the prior decision or because the prior decision, while persuasive, is not controlling.

If there is no prior caselaw on the issue, then counsel’s motion should be devoted primarily to a construction of the statute. In addition to parsing the statutory language, counsel should examine the relevant legislative history of the applicable statute for indications that the legislature (1) considered various factual situations to which the statute was intended to apply and did not mean it to reach facts like those in the respondent’s case or (2) enacted the statute to achieve certain goals of policy that do not call for an application of the statute to acts such as those committed by the respondent.

§ 17.03(b) Failure To Allege Facts That Make Out Every Element of the Charged Offense

A charging paper may quite simply have something missing. The conduct with which it charges the respondent is perfectly consistent with criminality, but some ingredient of the crime is omitted. Thus, for example, a Petition alleging that the respondent committed burglary by unlawfully entering the complainant’s dwelling is legally insufficient because it omits one element of burglary: “intent to commit a crime therein.” The allegation of unlawful entry might support a charge of criminal trespass, but it is insufficient to support the charged offense of burglary. *See, e.g., State ex rel. Day v. Silver*, 210 W.Va. 175, 180, 556 S.E.2d 820, 825 (2001) (“We . . . hold that in order for an indictment for larceny to be sufficient in law, it must identify with specificity the particular items of property which are the subject of the charge by specifically describing said property, unless the property is incapable of identification as in cases involving fungible goods, United States currency, or comparable articles. Likewise, in order for an indictment for destruction of property to be sufficient in law, it must identify with specificity the particular items of property which are the subject of the charge by specifically describing said property, unless the property is incapable of identification as in cases involving fungible goods, United States currency, or comparable articles.”).

Local practice varies enormously with regard to the significance that an omission must have in order to be fatal. Most jurisdictions require allegations of: (1) the name of the respondent, (2) a description or characterization of the respondent’s conduct that asserts (in factual or conclusory terms) every legal element of the offense charged (including acts done, any circumstances surrounding them that are necessary to make them unlawful, and the requisite mental state or *mens rea*), (3) the place of the crime (disclosing venue in the court, see § 17.05 *infra*), and (4) the approximate date of the crime (within the statute of limitations, see § 17.07 *infra*). Beyond these rudiments, the States differ (and often differ from offense to offense) regarding what must be charged. Some jurisdictions require the name of the victim and great particularization of the means or instrumentalities of the offense. Others disregard these matters. Some disregard even the rudiments just described. Conspicuous among the latter are States that provide statutory “short forms,” declaring that a charging paper shall be sufficient for the crime of *x* if it alleges: “On [date], respondent A committed the crime of *x* against complainant B within the jurisdiction of this Court.” Local practice must be consulted in the matter.

§ 17.03(c) Lack of Specificity

A charging paper may be wholly unspecific and conclusory. It may duplicate the language of the criminal statute (A “did commit a lewd act”) without giving the slightest idea what the respondent *did*. Again, the States vary considerably in the factual specificity required. Many permit allegations in conclusory statutory language under all but the vaguest statutes. *Cf. Michigan v. Doran*, 439 U.S. 282, 290 (1978) (dictum). However, there are limits. A formulation of the rule found in the caselaw of numerous jurisdictions is that: “It is generally sufficient that [a charging paper] . . . set forth the offense in the words of the statute itself, as long as ‘those words of themselves fully, directly, and expressly, without any uncertainty or ambiguity, set forth all the elements necessary to constitute the offence intended to be punished.’ . . . ‘Undoubtedly the language of the statute may be used in the general description of an offence, but it must be accompanied with such a statement of the facts and circumstances as will inform the accused of the specific offence, coming under the general description, with which he is charged.’ . . .” *Hamling v. United States*, 418 U.S. 87, 117-18 (1974); *see also United States v. Resendiz-Ponce*, 549 U.S. 102, 108-10 (2007); *United States v. Bailey*, 444 U.S. 394, 414 (1980).

Conclusory pleading has several recognized vices. First, it impairs the respondent’s rights to be “fairly inform[ed] . . . of the charge against which he must defend” (*United States v. Resendiz-Ponce*, 549 U.S. at 108, quoting *Hamling v. United States*, 418 U.S. at 117; and see § 9.09(b)(2) *supra*). Second, it frustrates the respondent’s interest in having “the record . . . sho[w] with accuracy to what extent he may plead a former acquittal or conviction [that is, double jeopardy, see § 17.08 *infra*]” in the event of a subsequent prosecution (*Sanabria v. United States*, 437 U.S. 54, 66 (1978)). Third, it deprives the respondent of any opportunity to test the prosecution’s legal theory without contesting its facts – an opportunity traditionally provided by the motion to dismiss and by its progenitor, the common-law demurrer (*see, e.g., Russell v. United States*, 369 U.S. 749 (1962); see § 17.03(a) *supra*). Although some judges seem to think that a vague charging paper can be cured by a bill of particulars (see § 9.07(a) *supra*), the bill actually remedies only the first two of these three vices. It does not touch the third because of the general rule that a demurrer or motion to dismiss will not lie to a bill of particulars. Therefore, attacks upon even venerable forms of conclusory charging papers can be forcefully argued on the ground that these preclude the court from performing its important function of testing the legal sufficiency of the prosecutor’s case.

§ 17.04 JURISDICTIONAL DEFECTS: MAXIMUM AGE AND MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR JUVENILE COURT PROSECUTIONS

§ 17.04(a) Maximum Age

In every State the juvenile code defines the jurisdiction of the juvenile court by establishing a maximum age that marks the limit of eligibility for prosecution as a delinquent. The vast majority of States define 18 as the maximum age, although some jurisdictions have opted for 17 or 16. Many States provide that children within a certain age range (for example, ages 16 to 18) who commit certain crimes are eligible for prosecution in either the juvenile or

adult court, thereby giving the two sets of courts concurrent jurisdiction over these children. See Chapter 13.

A key issue is whether juvenile court jurisdiction hinges on the respondent's age at the time of the filing of the Petition or at the time of the crime. Most States treat the respondent's age at the time of the crime as decisive, permitting juvenile court prosecution of a child who is older than the statutory maximum as long as s/he was under the maximum at the time of the crime. *See, e.g.*, CAL. WELF. & INST. CODE §§ 602, 604(a) (2016); COLO. REV. STAT. ANN. § 19-1-103(8)(a) (2016); N.Y. FAM. CT. ACT § 302.1(2) (2016). A few States turn eligibility for juvenile court prosecution on the child's age at the time the proceedings commence, *see, e.g.*, OR. REV. STAT. § 419C.005(1) (2016); *State v. Salavea*, 151 Wash. 2d 133, 141-42, 86 P.3d 125, 129 (2004) (under applicable statute, juvenile court jurisdiction turns on the "age of the defendant at the time of the proceedings, regardless of age at commission of the crime"), and another handful of States extend jurisdiction to children on the basis of their age at the time of the commission of the crime, provided that the child does not exceed another designated maximum age by the time the proceedings commence. *See, e.g.*, N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 169-B:4(I) (2016) (under 18 at the time of the crime, and under 19 at the time the petition is filed); PA. CONS. STAT. ANN. tit. 42, § 6302 (2016) (under 18 at the time of the crime and under 21 at the time the petition is filed); TEX. FAM. CODE ANN. § 51.02(2)(B) (2016) (under 17 at the time of the crime and under 18 at the time the petition is filed). In States that determine juvenile court jurisdiction by reference to the child's age at the time the proceedings commence, the courts have ruled that the juvenile court retains jurisdiction (or that the adult court lacks jurisdiction) when the prosecutor's or police officers' delay in commencing proceedings was motivated by the purpose of preventing the child from being eligible for juvenile court treatment. *See Miller v. Quatsoe*, 348 F. Supp. 764 (E.D. Wis. 1972), discussed in § 13.04 *supra*; *State v. Scurlock*, 286 Or. 277, 593 P.2d 1159 (1979); *State v. Hodges*, 28 Wash. App. 902, 904-05, 626 P.2d 1025, 1026 (1981); *State v. Becker*, 74 Wis. 2d 675, 247 N.W.2d 495 (1976).

Counsel must weigh considerations carefully and must consult with the client before challenging the jurisdiction of the juvenile court on the ground that the respondent is above the maximum age for juvenile court prosecution. By definition, if s/he is above this age, s/he is subject to prosecution as an adult. Accordingly, the net result of counsel's successful litigation of the motion to dismiss on jurisdictional grounds will usually be the dismissal of the juvenile court Petition and the subsequent filing of a charging paper in adult criminal court. (While some offenses may be too minor for the adult court prosecutor to bother with, and some cases may fall between the cracks, counsel cannot accurately predict either of these contingencies.) Section 13.02 *supra* describes the factors that counsel should consider and about which counsel should advise the client in deciding whether to opt for prosecution in juvenile court or adult court.

§ 17.04(b) Minimum Age and the Infancy Defense

In a handful of States the statute defining the jurisdiction of the juvenile court establishes a minimum age, below which children are not subject to juvenile court prosecution and thus

cannot be prosecuted in any court. *See* MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. ch. 119, § 52 (2016) (age 7); MISS. CODE ANN. § 43-21-105(i) (2016) (age 10); N.Y. FAM. CT. ACT § 301.2(1) (2016) (age 7); TEX. FAM. CODE ANN. § 51.02(2)(A) (2016) (age 10); VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 33, § 5102(2)(C) (2016) (age 10). *See also In the Matter of the Welfare of S.A.C.*, 529 N.W.2d 517, 519 (Minn. App. 1995) (although the Juvenile Court Act’s delinquency provisions do not establish a minimum age, the court concludes that the CHIPS (“child in need of protection or services”) statute, which excludes children below the age of 10 from CHIPS jurisdiction, evidences a legislative “intent to take these children out of the delinquency definition” as well).

In some other States, in which the juvenile court statute is silent on the issue of minimum age, the courts recognize the common-law doctrine of infancy as applying to delinquency prosecutions. At common law, children under the age of seven were irrebuttably presumed to be incapable of forming criminal intent and therefore could not be culpable of an offense; children between the ages of seven and fourteen were subject to a rebuttable presumption of incapacity, which precluded prosecution unless the state proved that the child knew the wrongfulness of his or her act. *See* 4 WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, COMMENTARIES ON THE LAW OF ENGLAND 23-24 (1769). *See also* Andrew M. Carter, *Age Matters: The Case for a Constitutionalized Infancy Defense*, 54 U. KAN. L. REV. 687, 707-14 (2006). Some state courts have construed their juvenile court statutes in accordance with this common-law doctrine to deem children below a certain age exempt from prosecution as juveniles and to establish a rebuttable presumption that minors above that age and within a specified age range are incapable of committing a crime. *See, e.g., In re William A.*, 313 Md. 690, 693, 698-99, 548 A.2d 130, 131, 134 (1988) (the “common law defense of infancy” – “under which an individual below the age of seven years cannot be found guilty of committing a crime” and under which “there is a rebuttable presumption” that children “between the ages of seven and fourteen . . . [are] incapable of committing a crime” – “applies in juvenile delinquency adjudicatory hearings” because “[t]he defense is a firmly established principle of our common law; the General Assembly is undoubtedly cognizant of it, but the Legislature has never repealed it, nor modified it, nor stated that it is inapplicable to juvenile delinquency proceedings,” and “[r]epeals by implication are, of course, disfavored”); *State v. Q.D.*, 102 Wash. 2d 19, 22-24, 685 P.2d 557, 559-60 (1984) (construing the juvenile court statute in light of the common-law doctrine and the adult Penal Code to bar prosecution of children below the age of eight and to establish a rebuttable presumption that children between 8 and 12 years of age are incapable of committing a crime); *State v. K.R.L.*, 67 Wash. App. 721, 724, 726, 840 P.2d 210, 212-13 (1992) (8-year-old was exempt from prosecution as a delinquent because the state failed to satisfy its “significant burden” of presenting “clear and convincing” evidence to rebut the presumption of incapacity to commit a crime). Other courts have relied upon the common-law doctrine in construing their statutes to bar prosecution of young children who lack the capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of their actions or to form the mental element of the offense charged. *See, e.g., In re Gladys R.*, 1 Cal. 3d 855, 862-67, 464 P.2d 127, 132-36, 83 Cal. Rptr. 671, 676-80 (1970) (construing the juvenile statute to prohibit prosecution of children below the age of 14 who are unable to understand the wrongfulness of their conduct); *State in the Interest of C.P.*, 212 N.J. Super. 222, 229, 514 A.2d 850, 854 (1986) (construing the juvenile code to prohibit prosecution of children who are incapable of forming the *mens rea* of

the offense charged or who are incapable of understanding the significance of the trial or aiding in their own defense); *In the Matter of Robert M.*, 110 Misc. 2d 113, 116, 441 N.Y.S.2d 860, 863 (N.Y. Fam. Ct. 1981) (construing the juvenile statute in light of the common-law and the social scientific literature to prohibit prosecution of children whose “immaturity . . . negatives the requisite specific intent” to constitute the offense charged). However, some courts wholly reject the infancy doctrine as a defense in juvenile court, reasoning that the doctrine was intended solely as a safeguard against exposure of children to the harshness of the criminal system and therefore is inapplicable to delinquency proceedings because these supposedly focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment. *See, e.g., In re Tyvonne*, 211 Conn. 151, 161, 558 A.2d 661, 666 (1989); *State v. D.H.*, 340 So. 2d 1163 (Fla. 1976); *In the Interest of G.T.*, 409 Pa. Super. 15, 25, 597 A.2d 638, 643 (1991); *In re Michael*, 423 A.2d 1180 (R.I. 1981).

As explained in § 17.04(a) *supra*, most jurisdictions look to the age of the child at the time of the crime for jurisdictional purposes, but some jurisdictions look to the age of the child at the time of the filing of the Petition. Counsel can argue persuasively that, at least with respect to minimum age requirements, the only permissible consideration is age at the time of the crime, and that children who were ineligible for prosecution at the time of the crime cannot be prosecuted later. This follows from the nature of the common-law infancy doctrine: Its presumption of incapacity to form the requisite mental state for criminality was concerned with whether or not the child’s age – and mental state as shaped by chronological age – at the time of the crime rendered him or her culpable for his or her actions.

In States that have a statutory or common-law minimum age requirement, counsel for an under-age respondent can raise the jurisdictional issue either by a pretrial motion to dismiss or at trial. If the statute or caselaw establish an absolute bar to prosecution of the child, there is no risk involved in raising the issue by pretrial motion, and that procedure is in the child’s interest because it terminates the case quickly. But if the applicable statutory or common-law standard permits the prosecutor to prove eligibility for prosecution by showing that the respondent is capable of forming a particular mental state (the *mens rea* of the crime, an appreciation of the wrongfulness of the act, an understanding of the proceedings, an ability to assist in his or her own defense), counsel is well advised to raise the jurisdictional defense for the first time at trial, so that a prosecutor who has not spotted the issue will fail to gather the psychiatric and other evidence s/he needs to satisfy the prosecution’s burden.

§ 17.05 DISMISSAL OF THE CHARGING PAPER FOR FAILURE TO ESTABLISH VENUE

A charging paper is generally held fatally defective if it does not allege facts establishing venue in the court where it is filed. Allegations in terms of “X street” or “Y township” are ordinarily sufficient; the court will judicially notice that X street or Y township is within the geographical jurisdiction of the court, if it is.

Criminal venue (and its analogue in juvenile delinquency cases) is governed by statute

within constitutional limitations. The prevalent state constitutional provision guaranteeing trial by a jury of the vicinage may or may not comport a venue restriction (*see* WAYNE R. LAFAVE, JEROLD H. ISRAEL, NANCY J. KING & ORIN S. KERR, 4 CRIMINAL PROCEDURE §§ 16.1-16.2 (4th ed.); Lisa E. Alexander, *Vicinage, Venue, and Community Cross-Section: Obstacles to a State Defendant's Right to Trial by a Representative Jury*, 19 HASTINGS CONST. L. Q. 261 (1991); Drew Kershen, *Vicinage*, 29 OKLA. L. REV. 801 (1976); 30 OKLA. L. REV. 1 (1977)); and even those forms of state jury-trial guarantees that omit explicit reference to “vicinage” may be read as restricting the place of trial or the area from which the trial jury pool can be drawn (*see Alvarado v. State*, 486 P.2d 891 (Alaska 1971)). The Sixth Amendment to the federal Constitution requires trial “by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law.” *See United States v. Johnson*, 323 U.S. 273, 275 (1944); *Platt v. Minnesota Mining & Mfg. Co.*, 376 U.S. 240, 245-46 (1964); *cf.* U.S. CONST. art. III § 2, cl. 3. The incorporation of the Sixth Amendment into the Fourteenth by *Duncan v. Louisiana*, 391 U.S. 145 (1968) may, therefore, entail some measure of federal constitutional restraint upon state legislative power to manipulate criminal venue. *See Williams v. Florida*, 399 U.S. 78, 92-97 (1970); *Mareska v. State*, 534 N.E.2d 246 (Ind. App. 1989); *but see Price v. Superior Court*, 25 Cal. 4th 104, 625 P.3d 618, 108 Cal. Rptr. 2d 409 (2001); *State v. Bowman*, 588 A.2d 728 (Maine 1991).

The general constitutional and statutory rule is that offenses are triable only in the county (or circuit or other judicial unit) comprising the place where the offense was committed. The “crime-committed” formula depends principally on the statutory elements of the offense: If a defendant or juvenile respondent mails a false application to a state agency in another county, for example, venue may turn on whether the statute punishes “making” a false statement or “filing” one. Crimes, the operative elements of which occur in more than one county, are generally triable in either. Conspiracies are triable wherever the conspiracy was maintained (a mystic notion meaning, in practice, wherever any one of the conspirators spent any considerable amount of time during the conspiracy) or wherever any act in furtherance of the conspiracy was done. When the substantive law of conspiracy requires an overt act, venue demands at least one overt act within the territorial jurisdiction of the court. (At the trial stage, this latter rule may become quite significant. In the course of forum-shopping, prosecutors frequently pick a jurisdiction having only very attenuated contacts with a conspiracy and allege only one or two overt acts within it. If they fail to prove these specific overt acts at trial, an acquittal is compelled, even though the conspiracy is otherwise abundantly proved.)

Local practice should be consulted for the intricacies of venue lore.

§ 17.06 TECHNICAL DEFECTS IN THE CHARGING PAPER

Charging papers may be assailed by motion on a host of technical grounds, some relating to the nature of the charging language (“duplicity,” vagueness, noncompliance with prescribed statutory forms), others relating to strictly formal matters (failure of the Petition to carry the signature of the prosecutor as required by law, failure of the Petition to list the names of the

witnesses it intends to present at trial (see § 9.07(b) *supra*), untimeliness of a motion by the prosecutor to amend the Petition, and so forth. *See, e.g., Shaw v. Wilson*, 721 F.3d 908 (7th Cir. 2013). Some of these defects are remediable and will be ordered remedied without the dismissal, re-drawing, and re-filing of the Petition. Others are grounds for dismissal. Local practice must be consulted.

§ 17.07 STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

Statutes of limitations of prosecutions prescribe the permissible period of time within which a charging paper may be filed after an event, asserting liability based on that event.

In many jurisdictions a charging paper is subject to a motion to dismiss if it either (a) does not allege the date of the offense charged with reasonable specificity (“on or about” will do) or (b) alleges a date that is beyond the period of limitations. Such a motion may, and usually must, be made before trial, within the deadline for pretrial motions (see § 7.05 *supra*). In other jurisdictions the respondent must go to trial and raise the defense of the statute of limitations by a demurrer to the evidence or a motion for acquittal at the close of the prosecution’s case.

To find the statute of limitations that applies to a delinquency offense, counsel must check both the criminal statute establishing the period of limitations for the particular offense and the juvenile code, which may set an earlier period of limitation based upon the child’s attainment of the age of majority. *See, e.g., N.Y. FAM. CT. ACT § 302.2* (2016) (“juvenile delinquency proceeding must be commenced within the period of limitation prescribed in . . . the criminal procedure law or, unless the alleged act is a designated felony . . ., commenced before the respondent’s eighteenth birthday, whichever occurs earlier”); *In re Luis R.*, 2013 IL App. 2d 120393, 992 N.E.2d 591, 592, 372 Ill. Dec. 749, 750 (2013) (juvenile court lacked jurisdiction even though the respondent “was under the age of 17 when he allegedly committed the offenses” because “he was over the age of 21 when the petition was filed”).

§ 17.08 DOUBLE JEOPARDY

§ 17.08(a) Introduction: The General Rules

Guarantees against being “twice put in jeopardy” may be found in the Fifth Amendment to the federal Constitution and in most state constitutions. In *Benton v. Maryland*, 395 U.S. 784 (1969), the Supreme Court incorporated the Fifth Amendment guarantee into the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and thereby made it binding in state criminal prosecutions. In *Breed v. Jones*, 421 U.S. 519 (1975), the Court ruled that double jeopardy guarantees are fully applicable to juvenile delinquency proceedings.

Federal and state constitutional double jeopardy guarantees establish the general rule that a respondent may not be reprosecuted for the “same offense” if the first trial ended in acquittal or conviction, or if the first trial passed the stage at which jeopardy “attaches” and then ended in a

mistrial declared without some “manifest necessity” or the respondent’s assent. Each element of this general rule, however, has been qualified by complex definitions and exceptions. Section 17.08(b) *infra* defines the concepts of “attachment of jeopardy” and “same offense.” Sections 17.08(c), (d), and (e) examine, respectively, the double jeopardy doctrines governing re prosecution when there has been an acquittal, conviction, or mistrial.

Sections 17.08(f), (g), and (h) then discuss other double jeopardy doctrines. Section 17.08(f) describes the collateral estoppel doctrine that applies to retrials. Section 17.08(g) explains the “dual sovereignty” exception to double jeopardy guarantees. Section 17.08(h) examines the double jeopardy implications of a juvenile court scheme in which evidence is heard first by a referee and the referee’s findings are thereafter reviewed by a juvenile court judge.

§ 17.08(b) Definitions

§ 17.08(b)(1) “Attachment of Jeopardy”

Double jeopardy protections come into play only after a first trial has passed the stage at which jeopardy “attaches.” In a bench trial jeopardy attaches when the first witness is sworn and the presentation of evidence commences. *Crist v. Bretz*, 437 U.S. 28, 37 n.15 (1978); *Serfass v. United States*, 420 U.S. 377, 388 (1975). In a jury trial jeopardy attaches when the jury is sworn. *Crist v. Bretz*, 437 U.S. at 35-38; *Martinez v. Illinois*, 134 S. Ct. 2070, 2074-75 (2014) (per curiam).

§ 17.08(b)(2) “Same Offense”

The guarantee against double jeopardy forbids a respondent’s “be[ing] subject for the *same offence* to be[ing] twice put in jeopardy of life or limb.” U.S. CONST, amend. V (emphasis added). Thus a threshold issue in double jeopardy analysis is whether the offense for which the respondent is being prosecuted is the “same offense” for which s/he was previously tried. This issue is obviously clear-cut when the second charge leveled against the respondent is a violation of the same criminal code provision that bottomed the first. More difficult issues emerge, however, when the respondent’s conduct violates two separate statutory provisions, and s/he is prosecuted first for one statutory violation and then the other.

“Where the same conduct violates two statutory provisions, the first step in the double jeopardy analysis is to determine whether the legislature . . . intended that each violation be a separate offense. If [the legislature] . . . intended that there be only one offense – that is, a [respondent] . . . could be convicted under either statutory provision for a single act, but not under both – there would be no statutory authorization for a subsequent prosecution after conviction [or acquittal] of one of the two provisions, and that would end the double jeopardy analysis.” *Garrett v. United States*, 471 U.S. 773, 778 (1985).

Techniques for divining legislative intent in the common situation in which it is unclear

differ considerably among the jurisdictions. In construing federal legislation, the Supreme Court has employed the so-called *Blockburger* test, deriving from *Blockburger v. United States*, 284 U.S. 299 (1932), which “emphasizes the elements of the two crimes . . . [and asks whether] ‘each requires proof of a fact that the other does not’” (*Brown v. Ohio*, 432 U.S. 161, 166 (1977)). See, e.g., *Rutledge v. United States*, 517 U.S. 292, 297 (1996); *United States v. Dixon*, 509 U.S. 688, 696 (1993); *Ball v. United States*, 470 U.S. 856, 861 (1985). The Court has cautioned that the “*Blockburger* rule[,] . . . [although] a useful canon of statutory construction,” is not “a conclusive determinant of legislative intent” and “the *Blockburger* presumption must . . . yield to a plainly expressed contrary view on the part of [the legislature].” *Garrett v. United States*, 471 U.S. at 779. See also *Missouri v. Hunter*, 459 U.S. 359, 368 (1983); *Wood v. Milyard*, 721 F.3d 1190, 1195 (10th Cir. 2013). But, at least in the context of successive prosecutions – as distinguished from multiple charges joined for simultaneous adjudication in a single trial – it is arguable that the *Blockburger* test should prevail and preclude subjecting a respondent to two trials for offenses having identical elements unless the legislature intended specifically to authorize not merely cumulative punishments but multiple trials. And it would be a rare statute that could reasonably be found to manifest the latter intent. See *Ex Parte Chaddock*, 369 S.W.3d 880, 883, 886 (Tex. Crim. App. 2012) (even if “the Legislature manifested its intention that an accused be punished for both offenses,” the Double Jeopardy Clause nonetheless bars “successive prosecutions” for both offenses; “Multiple punishments that result from a single prosecution do not subject a defendant to the evils attendant upon successive prosecutions, namely the ‘embarrassment, expense and ordeal’ of repetitive trials, ‘compelling [the accused] to live in a continuing state of anxiety and insecurity,’ and creating ‘a risk of conviction through sheer governmental perseverance.’” (footnotes omitted)).

In interpreting their state constitutions and statutes, some state courts employ the *Blockburger* test. See, e.g., *State v. Watkins*, 362 S.W.3d 530 (Tenn. 2012). Other courts use the “same transaction” or compulsory-joinder approach articulated by Justice Brennan, concurring, in *Ashe v. Swenson*, 397 U.S. 436, 450-60 (1970); see, e.g., *State v. Boyd*, 271 Or. 558, 533 P.2d 795 (1975), and the authorities collected in *Brooks v. Oklahoma*, 456 U.S. 999, 1000 (1982) (opinion of Justice Brennan, dissenting from denial of *certiorari*).

§ 17.08(c) Re prosecution After An Acquittal

Double jeopardy guarantees clearly and unequivocally bar re prosecution for the same offense after an individual has been acquitted. *United States v. Martin Linen Supply Co.*, 430 U.S. 564 (1977); see, e.g., *Ball v. United States*, 163 U.S. 662, 671 (1896); *United States v. Scott*, 437 U.S. 82, 91 (1978); *Bullington v. Missouri*, 451 U.S. 430, 437-38, 445 (1981), and cases cited; *Yeager v. United States*, 557 U.S. 110, 117-20, 122-23 (2009). Cf. *Blueford v. Arkansas*, 132 S. Ct. 2044, 2050-52 (2012). “A trial court’s actions constitute ‘an acquittal on the merits when “the ruling of the judge . . . represents a resolution [in defendant’s favor] . . . of some or all of the factual elements of the offenses charged.”’ . . . In determining whether a trial court’s ruling represents a resolution in the defendant’s favor of some or all of the factual elements of the offense charged, we consider both the form and the substance of the trial court’s ruling. . . . A

finding of insufficient evidence to convict amounts to an acquittal on the merits because such a finding involves a factual determination about the defendant's guilt or innocence." *State v. Sahr*, 812 N.W.2d 83, 90 (Minn. 2012) (reviewing relevant decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court and applying them to bar reprosecution after a trial judge has dismissed a charging paper on the basis of the prosecution's "concession that it lacked sufficient evidence to prove an essential element" of the offense initially charged (*id.*) and has denied the prosecution leave to amend that charge by adding a count alleging a lesser-included crime (*id.* at 87)). *See also, e.g., Martinez v. Illinois*, 134 S. Ct. 2070, 2071, 2076 (2014) (per curiam) (the trial judge's grant of defense counsel's motion for "a directed not-guilty verdict" when the State "declined to present any evidence" and instead moved for a continuance after the jury had been empaneled and sworn, "was an acquittal because the court 'acted on its view that the prosecution had failed to prove its case.' . . . And because Martinez was acquitted, the State cannot retry him."). *And see Evans v. Michigan*, 133 S. Ct. 1069, 1073, 1074-75 (2013) (the trial judge's midtrial entry of a "directed verdict of acquittal" in a jury trial, based upon the judge's "view that the State had not provided sufficient evidence of a particular element of the offense" which "turn[ed] out" not to be "a required element at all," constituted "an acquittal for double jeopardy purposes" and barred a retrial notwithstanding the judge's error: "[A]n acquittal precludes retrial even if it is premised upon an erroneous decision to exclude evidence, . . . ; a mistaken understanding of what evidence would suffice to sustain a conviction, . . . ; or a 'misconstruction of the statute' defining the requirements to convict, In all these circumstances, 'the fact that the acquittal may result from erroneous evidentiary rulings or erroneous interpretations of governing legal principles affects the accuracy of that determination, but it does not alter its essential character.' . . . [O]ur cases have defined an acquittal to encompass any ruling that the prosecution's proof is insufficient to establish criminal liability for an offense.").

Unlike jury trials, in which a verdict of "not guilty" obviously is an "acquittal" for purposes of double jeopardy, *Fong Foo v. United States*, 369 U.S. 141 (1962) (per curiam), there may be questions whether a dismissal in a bench trial constituted an acquittal so as to bar reprosecution. *See, e.g., Smalis v. Pennsylvania*, 476 U.S. 140 (1986). The rule (which also applies to ambiguous rulings terminating a jury trial) is that "the trial judge's characterization of his own action cannot control the classification of the action." *United States v. Scott*, 437 U.S. at 96 (quoting *United States v. Jorn*, 400 U.S. 470, 478 n.7 (1971) (plurality opinion)). Instead, the test is whether "the ruling of the judge, whatever its label, actually represents a resolution [in the [respondent's] . . . favor], correct or not, of some or all of the factual elements of the offense charged." *United States v. Scott*, 437 U.S. at 97. *See, e.g., Sanabria v. United States*, 437 U.S. 54 (1978); *Martinez v. Illinois*, 134 S. Ct. at 2076. *See also In the Interest of M.H.P.*, 830 N.W.2d 216, 218-20 (N.D. 2013) (juvenile court judge's dismissal of a delinquency petition at disposition on the ground that M.H.P. was "not in need of treatment or rehabilitation" despite a finding at trial that he committed the charged act, functioned as an acquittal for double jeopardy purposes and "bars the State from appealing" because Nebraska's statutory definition of delinquency requires both a finding at trial that the child committed the charged act and a finding that the child is "in need of treatment or rehabilitation").

Although double jeopardy issues ordinarily arise when the government seeks to prosecute an individual after a first trial has concluded (either in a verdict or a mistrial), double jeopardy protections also may come into play if a trial judge grants a midtrial judgment of acquittal on one or more counts of the charging paper and is inclined to reconsider that ruling after the defense case has already commenced and the defense has begun presenting evidence. If the judge's ruling qualifies as a "judgment of acquittal" for double jeopardy purposes (under the test described in the preceding paragraph) and if state law does not expressly authorize judicial reconsideration of such a ruling (and – arguably – if, in addition, the judge does not reserve the right to reconsider or indicate that the ruling is not final), double jeopardy protections bar the trial judge from reconsidering the ruling. *Smith v. Massachusetts*, 543 U.S. 462, 473-74 (2005). Compare *Price v. Vincent*, 538 U.S. 634 (2003); *Schiro v. Farley*, 510 U.S. 222 (1994).

§ 17.08(d) Re prosecution After Conviction in the First Trial

Once convicted, a respondent may not be re prosecuted for the same offense. *E.g.*, *Brown v. Ohio*, 432 U.S. 161 (1977); *Harris v. Oklahoma*, 433 U.S. 682 (1977) (per curiam). This rule is said not to preclude a second prosecution in certain "special circumstances." *Ricketts v. Adamson*, 483 U.S. 1, 8 (1987). Three such circumstances recognized by the caselaw are: (i) when "the State is unable to proceed on the [second] . . . charge at the outset because the . . . facts necessary to sustain that charge have not occurred or have not been discovered despite the exercise of due diligence," *Brown v. Ohio*, 432 U.S. at 169 n.7 (dictum); see *Garrett v. United States*, 471 U.S. at 789-92; (ii) when the prosecution makes multiple charges in the alternative at the outset and the respondent elects to obtain a disposition of some of them prior to the others, *Jeffers v. United States*, 432 U.S. 137, 151-54 (1977); *Ohio v. Johnson*, 467 U.S. 493 (1984); and (iii) when the conviction on the earlier charges was the result of a plea agreement that the respondent later violates, *Ricketts v. Adamson*, 483 U.S. at 8-12.

Double jeopardy guarantees also do not bar re prosecution of a previously convicted respondent if the respondent succeeded in getting the first conviction set aside by a posttrial motion, an appeal, or postconviction proceedings. See, *e.g.*, *United States v. Tateo*, 377 U.S. 463, 465-68 (1964). However, retrial will be barred even after a conviction has been set aside if the basis for that action was a finding by either the trial court or an appellate court that the evidence was insufficient to support the conviction. *Hudson v. Louisiana*, 450 U.S. 40 (1981); *Burks v. United States*, 437 U.S. 1 (1978); *Monge v. California*, 524 U.S. 721, 729 (1998) (dictum). But see *Tibbs v. Florida*, 457 U.S. 31 (1982) (re prosecution permissible when the basis for reversal was not insufficiency of the evidence, but rather that the appellate court, sitting as a "thirteenth juror" found the conviction to be "against the weight of the evidence").

§ 17.08(e) Re prosecution After the First Trial Ends in a Mistrial

Double jeopardy guarantees will not bar re prosecution if the first trial ended in a mistrial, at the request of, or with the acquiescence of, the respondent, *United States v. Dinitz*, 424 U.S. 600 (1976), except when the respondent's request for the mistrial was occasioned by

prosecutorial misconduct “intended to ‘goad’ the [respondent] into moving for a mistrial” (*Oregon v. Kennedy*, 456 U.S. 667, 676 (1982) (dictum); *see, e.g., State v. Parker*, 391 S.C. 606, 707 S.E.2d 799 (2011)).

A mistrial declared without the respondent’s assent will bar reprosecution, *see, e.g., Downum v. United States*, 372 U.S. 734 (1963); *United States v. Jorn*, 400 U.S. 470 (1971), except when the mistrial was declared under circumstances of “manifest necessity.” *See, e.g., Illinois v. Somerville*, 410 U.S. 458 (1973); *Arizona v. Washington*, 434 U.S. 497 (1978); *Renico v. Lett*, 559 U.S. 766, 773-75 (2010); *Blueford v. Arkansas*, 132 S. Ct. at 2052-53. *Compare Mansfield v. State*, 422 Md. 269, 290-93, 29 A.3d 569, 581-83 (2011) (judge’s declaration of a mistrial at the close of evidence in a bench trial – based on her knowledge of the defendant’s having been twice previously convicted of similar crimes, once in a jury trial over which the judge herself presided – was not justified by a “manifest necessity,” and retrial therefore was barred by double jeopardy, because the judge possessed this knowledge before jeopardy attached and, “rather than proceeding to try the petitioner, knowing what she did of his criminal history, the trial judge should have recused herself”); *In re Morris v. Livote*, 105 A.D.3d 43, 47, 962 N.Y.S.2d 59, 62 (N.Y. App. Div., 1st Dept. 2013) (double jeopardy barred a retrial after the first trial ended with the judge’s granting the prosecution’s motion for a mistrial based on “defense counsel’s improper questioning” of a prosecution witness: “Although defense counsel’s disregard of the court’s instructions was blameworthy and understandably angered the court, the [defense] cross-examination did not rise to the level of the gross misconduct displayed in cases in which retrial was permitted”).

§ 17.08(f) Collateral Estoppel

The Supreme Court has held that the federal Fifth Amendment embodies a “rule of collateral estoppel” (often called “issue preclusion”) in criminal cases, *Yeager v. United States*, 557 U.S. 110, 119-20 & n.4 (2009); *Ashe v. Swenson*, 397 U.S. 436, 444 (1970), so that, following acquittal at a first trial, a criminal defendant or juvenile respondent may not be retried for any offense – whether or not it is the “same offense” within the definition of § 17.08(b)(2) *supra* – if conviction of the offense requires proof of facts that are inconsistent with the facts established in the accused’s favor by his or her prior acquittal. *E.g., Yeager v. United States*, 557 U.S. at 119-20; *Simpson v. Florida*, 403 U.S. 384 (1971) (per curiam); *Harris v. Washington*, 404 U.S. 55 (1971) (per curiam); *Turner v. Arkansas*, 407 U.S. 366 (1972) (per curiam); *Wilkinson v. Gingrich*, 806 F.3d 511, 516-20 (9th Cir. 2015). *Cf. Schiro v. Farley*, 510 U.S. 222, 232-36 (1994); and compare *Dowling v. United States*, 493 US 342, 350-52 (1990). Conviction of a lesser included offense or degree of offense probably constitutes an implicit acquittal of the greater offense or degree for this purpose, as it certainly does for purposes of the rule barring reprosecution for the “same offense” following an acquittal, *Price v. Georgia*, 398 U.S. 323 (1970); *De Mino v. New York*, 404 U.S. 1035 (1972) (per curiam). *Compare Yeager v. United States*, 557 U.S. at 121-23 (when a jury acquits a defendant on some counts of a multi-count indictment and hangs on others that require a finding of the same “critical issue of ultimate fact” as “an essential element,” the prosecution is barred from retrying the defendant on the counts on

which the jury hung; “collateral estoppel” or “issue-preclusion analysis” cannot ascribe significance to a jury’s inability to reach a verdict on the latter counts “[b]ecause a jury speaks only through its verdict” and thus “there is no way to decipher what a hung count represents”; “To identify what a jury necessarily determined at trial, courts should scrutinize a jury’s decisions, not its failures to decide.”) and *Roesser v. State*, 294 Ga. 295, 295, 298, 300, 751 S.E.2d 297, 297, 299, 301 (2013) (applying *Yeager v. United States* to hold that collateral estoppel barred retrial of the defendant for voluntary manslaughter, following a trial in which the jury acquitted the defendant of “malice murder, felony murder, and aggravated assault but was unable to reach a verdict on the lesser included offense of voluntary manslaughter”; “the jury in acquitting Roesser of [the higher counts] . . . necessarily determined that Roesser acted in self-defense and . . . this issue of ultimate fact constitutes a critical element of voluntary manslaughter”), with *Bobby v. Bies*, 556 U.S. 825, 835 (2009) (collateral estoppel does not apply to “a subsidiary finding that, standing alone, is not outcome determinative” but does apply to “a determination necessary to the bottom-line judgment”).

§ 17.08(g) Reprosecution by a Different Sovereign

The double jeopardy clause does not bar successive prosecutions by different sovereigns. So, for example, a respondent convicted of bank robbery in a state court may subsequently be prosecuted for federal bank robbery of the same bank. *See, e.g., Abbate v. United States*, 359 U.S. 187 (1959); *United States v. Wheeler*, 435 U.S. 313 (1978); *Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle*, 136 S. Ct. 1863, 1870-71 (2016) (dictum); *but see id.* at 1877 (concurring opinion of Justice Ginsburg, joined by Justice Thomas, questioning the future of the doctrine). Similarly, when two different States are in a position to prosecute a respondent for the same or closely related conduct, the separate prosecutions do not violate the Fifth Amendment. *Heath v. Alabama*, 474 U.S. 82 (1985). The “two sovereignties” principle does not, however, permit successive prosecutions by a State and its political subdivisions (for example, municipalities); these are barred by double jeopardy whenever successive prosecutions by the same prosecuting agency would be. *Waller v. Florida*, 397 U.S. 387 (1970); *United States v. Wheeler*, 435 U.S. at 318-22 (dictum); *Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle*, 136 S. Ct. at 1872 (dictum).

As a matter of executive policy, the federal Government seldom prosecutes persons previously convicted or acquitted of state crimes based on the same conduct. *See Thompson v. United States*, 444 U.S. 248 (1980): “The Department of Justice has a firmly established policy, known as the ‘Petite’ policy, under which United States Attorneys are forbidden to prosecute any person for allegedly criminal behavior if the alleged criminality was an ingredient of a previous state prosecution against that person. An exception is made only if the federal prosecution is specifically authorized in advance by the Department itself, upon a finding that the prosecution will serve ‘compelling interests of federal law enforcement.’” *Id.* at 248.

§ 17.08(h) Double Jeopardy Doctrines Governing a Juvenile Court Judge’s Review of the Findings of a Referee or Hearing Officer

In some States delinquency Petitions are tried first to a hearing officer (sometimes called a “referee” or “master”), who makes factual and legal findings and submits recommendations to the juvenile court judge. The judge then either ratifies or rejects the findings and recommendations of the hearing officer.

In *Swisher v. Brady*, 438 U.S. 204 (1978), the Court considered the double jeopardy implications of a trial judge’s overturning of a master’s order of dismissal. Under the Maryland statutory scheme at issue in *Swisher*, the juvenile court judge could not hear evidence but could only review the master’s findings on the basis of the evidence presented to the master. The Court in *Swisher* sustained the statutory scheme on the narrow ground that the scheme did not subject juveniles to more than one trial or evidentiary hearing. The Court emphasized that the judge’s review was merely a continuation of the original hearing and not a *de novo* hearing.

The *Swisher* decision leaves open the question whether a *de novo* hearing would constitute double jeopardy. The lower courts have split on this issue, with some courts holding that a *de novo* hearing would constitute double jeopardy, *see, e.g., Jesse W. v. Superior Court of San Mateo County*, 26 Cal. 3d 41, 603 P.2d 1296, 160 Cal. Rptr. 700 (1979); *R.G.S. v. District Court*, 636 P.2d 340 (Okla. Crim. App. 1981); *State v. Mershon*, 43 Wash. App. 132, 715 P.2d 1156 (1986), and other courts reaching the opposite conclusion, *see, e.g., In the Interest of Stephens*, 501 Pa. 411, 461 A.2d 1223 (1983), *appeal dismissed*, 466 U.S. 954 (1984) (holding that jeopardy does not attach at a master’s hearing, because the master’s findings are merely advisory).