

§ 42.05. Disrupting Meeting or Procession

- (a) A person commits an offense if, with intent to prevent or disrupt a lawful meeting, procession, or gathering, he obstructs or interferes with the meeting, procession, or gathering by physical action or verbal utterance.
- (b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.

Acts 1973, 63rd Leg., p. 833, ch. 399, § 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1974. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 900, § 1.01, eff. Sept. 1, 1994.

Commentary

This section prohibits interference with a lawful meeting, procession, or gathering by physical action or words, with the intent to disrupt or prevent the meeting. The terms “lawful meeting,” “procession” and “gathering” are broad enough to include any religious, social, or political groups. The focus of the statute is upon the disruption of the assembly, rather than upon the actor’s words. The actor must intend to disrupt or prevent the meeting. Simply expressing one’s dissenting view would not violate this statute. Although the intent to disrupt cannot be inferred solely from the constitutionally-protected speech, the intent may be proved if the actor’s exercise of the constitutional right is insignificant compared to the inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm caused by the speech.