

# RICO: Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act – Educational Overview

## 1. Introduction

The **Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO)** is a U.S. federal law, enacted in 1970, designed to combat **organized crime and coordinated criminal activity**. While originally aimed at mafia and gang organizations, its scope includes any group engaging in **systematic, ongoing illegal activity**.

RICO is unique because it allows prosecutors **and private parties** to target not only individuals committing crimes but also the **enterprise that enables or profits from those crimes**.

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## 2. Core Concepts

### A. Enterprise

- A group of individuals associated to commit or further criminal activity.
- Can include:
  - Businesses, informal groups, online communities, or social circles
  - Multiple perpetrators acting in coordination

### B. Pattern of Racketeering Activity

- Minimum of **two predicate acts** within **10 years**.
- “Predicate acts” include:
  - Fraud, extortion, blackmail
  - Sexual exploitation, coercion, revenge pornography (if coordinated)
  - Stalking, harassment, cybercrime
  - Identity theft, invasion of privacy

### C. Connection Between Enterprise and Acts

- The criminal acts must **advance the objectives of the enterprise**.
  - Individual illegal acts are insufficient unless part of an **organized pattern**.
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### 3. RICO in Criminal vs. Civil Context

Type	Purpose	Penalties / Remedies
<b>Criminal RICO</b>	Prosecuted by government	Prison, fines, asset forfeiture
<b>Civil RICO</b>	Private party sues for harm caused by enterprise	<b>Treble damages</b> (3× compensatory), attorney’s fees, injunctions

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### 4. How RICO Could Relate to Coordinated Revenge Porn / Harassment Campaigns

- **Enterprise Example:** A group of individuals coordinating revenge pornography, harassment, and coercive campaigns against specific targets.
  - **Pattern Example:** Repeated filming without consent, coercion, blackmail, stalking, and retaliatory campaigns (e.g., “stop having kids” advocacy).
  - **Predicate Acts:**
    - Nonconsensual filming / sexual exploitation
    - Harassment / threats
    - Invasion of privacy (private, ID photos)
    - Cybercrime or distribution of images online
    - Coercion / manipulation
  - **Result:** If proven, this could support either **civil or criminal RICO charges**.
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### 5. Advantages of RICO

1. **Targets the Entire Enterprise**
  - Not just a single individual, but all who coordinate to harm the victim.
2. **Enhanced Damages in Civil Cases**
  - Courts may award **treble damages**, which is three times the actual harm.
3. **Criminal Penalties for Coordinated Crime**
  - Includes prison, fines, and forfeiture of assets from enterprise activity.
4. **Broad Scope**
  - Applies to both offline and online coordinated campaigns, including social media and digital harassment.

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## 6. Limitations

- Must prove **enterprise structure**, not just individual acts.
  - Predicate acts must be **illegal under federal or state law**.
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## 7. Summary Example (Contextualized)

A coordinated campaign of harassment, nonconsensual filming, and coercive retaliation against a victim could be framed as a **RICO enterprise**. Multiple participants, repeated malicious acts, and a shared intent to harm the victim may constitute a “pattern of racketeering activity” under both **civil and criminal RICO**. Civil remedies could include **treble damages** and injunctive relief, while criminal prosecution could result in **prison, fines, and asset forfeiture**.

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This document can be used as a **primer for judges, attorneys, or educational purposes**, showing how **coordinated harmful activity against a person or group** can fit under RICO principles.

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### RICO elements—

- **Enterprise**
- **Pattern of acts**
- **Predicate offenses**
- **Civil and criminal remedies**