# IPC Section 199: False statement made in declaration which is by law receivable as evidence.

Section 199 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) addresses the offense of making a false statement in a declaration that is legally admissible as evidence. This section recognizes the potential for abuse when declarations, which are often made outside of a formal court setting, are used as evidence in legal proceedings. By criminalizing false statements in such declarations, the law seeks to ensure the reliability and integrity of evidence presented before courts.  
  
\*\*The Text of Section 199:\*\*  
  
"Whoever, in any declaration made or subscribed by him, which declaration any Court of Justice, or any public servant or other person, is bound or authorized by law to receive as evidence of any fact, makes any statement which is false, and which he either knows or believes to be false or does not believe to be true, touching any point material to the object for which the declaration is made or used, shall be punished in the same manner as if he gave false evidence."  
  
\*\*Key Elements of Section 199:\*\*  
  
1. \*\*Declaration Made or Subscribed by Him:\*\* This element defines the scope of the section. It applies to written statements, or declarations, that an individual makes and signs, or subscribes to. These declarations are distinct from oral testimony given under oath in court.  
  
2. \*\*Declaration Receivable as Evidence by Law:\*\* The declaration must be of a type that a court of justice, public servant, or other authorized person is legally obligated or permitted to accept as evidence. This typically includes affidavits, statutory declarations, and other formalized written statements intended to be used as proof of certain facts.  
  
3. \*\*Makes Any Statement Which is False:\*\* This is the core of the offense. The individual must make a statement within the declaration that is factually untrue.  
  
4. \*\*Knows or Believes to be False or Does Not Believe to be True:\*\* This element addresses the \*mens rea\* (mental element) of the offense. The prosecution must establish one of the following:  
 \* \*\*Knowledge of Falsity:\*\* The individual knew the statement was false when they made it.  
 \* \*\*Belief in Falsity:\*\* The individual believed the statement was false when they made it.  
 \* \*\*Lack of Belief in Truth:\*\* The individual did not believe the statement to be true when they made it. This covers situations where the individual makes a statement recklessly, without any genuine belief in its truthfulness.  
  
This nuanced approach to \*mens rea\* ensures that individuals cannot escape liability by claiming ignorance or simply stating they "didn't know" if the statement was true.  
  
5. \*\*Touching any Point Material to the Object for which the Declaration is Made or Used:\*\* The false statement must be relevant and significant to the purpose of the declaration. A "material point" refers to any detail that is important or affects the overall meaning or validity of the declaration. A trivial or inconsequential falsehood would not fall under this section.  
  
6. \*\*Punished in the same manner as if he gave false evidence:\*\* This clause, similar to the wording in Sections 196 and 198, links the punishment for making a false declaration to the penalties prescribed for giving false evidence under other relevant sections of the IPC, primarily Sections 191, 192, 193, 194, and 195. This creates a graded system of punishments, with the severity of the penalty depending on the gravity of the legal proceedings in which the false declaration is used or intended to be used.  
  
\*\*Punishment Under Section 199:\*\*  
  
The punishment under Section 199 is not explicitly stated within the section itself. It references the penalties for giving false evidence, which means the punishment will vary depending on the context in which the false declaration is used and the potential consequences of its use. For example, if a false declaration is used in a trial for an offense punishable with life imprisonment, the punishment under Section 199 would be the same as that for giving false evidence in such a trial, as described in Section 195.  
  
\*\*Evidentiary Challenges and Burden of Proof:\*\*  
  
Proving the elements of Section 199, particularly the knowledge or belief regarding the falsity of the statement, can be complex. The prosecution must demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the individual knew, believed, or did not believe the statement to be true when they made it. This often requires circumstantial evidence, such as inconsistencies in the declaration, evidence of a motive to lie, or contradictory evidence from other sources.  
  
\*\*Relationship with Other Sections:\*\*  
  
Section 199 is connected to other sections of the IPC dealing with false evidence:  
  
\* \*\*Section 191 (Giving False Evidence):\*\* Section 199 expands the scope of offenses related to false evidence to encompass false statements in declarations.  
\* \*\*Sections 192-195 (False Evidence and Related Offenses):\*\* These sections provide the framework for determining the appropriate punishment under Section 199 based on the context in which the false declaration is used.  
\* \*\*Section 197 (Issuing or Signing False Certificate):\*\* Both sections address false statements in legal documents, but Section 199 focuses specifically on declarations made by individuals, while Section 197 deals with certificates issued by authorities.  
  
  
\*\*Importance of Section 199:\*\*  
  
Section 199 plays a crucial role in ensuring the reliability of evidence presented in legal proceedings. It recognizes that declarations, while often made outside of a formal court setting, can significantly influence judicial decisions. By criminalizing false statements in such declarations, the section safeguards the integrity of the judicial process and protects individuals from being unjustly affected by misleading or fabricated information. This reinforces public trust in the justice system and upholds the principle that legal decisions should be based on truth and accurate evidence.