

## Self Defense—The Major Rules

### I. When Privilege is Triggered:

You **may**:

- [1] use force against another person [ $\pi$ ];
- [2] cause an apprehension of imminent harmful or offensive contact to another person [ $\pi$ ];
- [3] or imprison or confine another person [ $\pi$ ];

**IF** you actually and reasonably believe that the other person [ $\pi$ ] is intentionally or negligently either

- [1]. Imminently going to cause a harmful or offensive contact to yourself or a third person; or
- [2]. Imminently going to confine or imprison yourself or a third person.

### II. Force That May Be Used: You may only use an amount of force/confinement that is reasonably necessary to prevent or repel the impending contact or confinement.

- [1] You may **threaten** to use (but not actually use) an amount of force or confinement that would exceed what is reasonably necessary.

### III. When Retreat Necessary: In some cases, if a safe and reasonable retreat is available, you must retreat, rather than stand and defend yourself.

- [1] If the impending threat is one that **would not**—in the mind of a reasonable person—cause death or serious bodily injury, you may stand your ground and defend yourself with whatever is permitted under § II *supra*; you are not obligated to use a safe and reasonable retreat.
- [2] If the impending threat is one that **could** cause death or serious bodily injury—in the mind of a reasonable person—and there is a safe and reasonable retreat available then:
  - [a]. In most jurisdictions, you must (1) use that escape, (2) limit your actions to threats intended to cause apprehension, *see* § II.[1] *supra*, or (3) limit your use of actual force or confinement to something less than that intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily harm.
    - [i]. Unless you are in your home, in which case you may use force or confinement intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily harm.
    - [b]. In some “frontier” jurisdictions, you may stand your ground and defend yourself and use force or confinement intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily harm.
  - [3] In some jurisdictions, if you are aware that the impending harm is one only negligently made by the person, you must retreat if it is safe and reasonable to so do.