**20.15 Sexual Abuse—Defense of Reasonable Belief**

**of Minor’s Age (18 U.S.C. § 2243(c)(1))**

It is a defense to the charge of [attempted] sexual abuse of a minor that the defendant reasonably believed that the minor had reached the age of sixteen. The defendant has the burden of proving that it is more probably true than not true that the defendant reasonably believed that the minor had reached the age of sixteen.

If you find that the defendant reasonably believed that the minor had reached the age of sixteen, you must find the defendant not guilty.

**Comment**

This defense applies only to offenses under 18 U.S.C. § 2243(a). *See* Instructions 20.11 (Sexual Abuse of Minor (18 U.S.C. § 2243(a))) and 20.12 (Attempted Sexual Abuse of Minor (18 U.S.C. § 2243(a))).