

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

2026 Legislative Session

Bill No. CB-008-2026

Chapter No. 5

Proposed and Presented by Council Members Oriadha, Fisher, Olson and Adams-Stafford

Introduced by Council Members Oriadha, Olson, Adams-Stafford, Hunter, Adams,
Harrison, Ivey, Dernoga and Blegay

Co-Sponsors _____

Date of Introduction March 17, 2026

EMERGENCY BILL

1 AN EMERGENCY ACT concerning

2 Prohibition on Facial Coverings for Law Enforcement

3 For the purpose of prohibiting certain law enforcement officers from wearing face coverings that
 4 conceal or obscure the face while interacting with the public in the performance of official duties
 5 in Prince George's County; providing definitions and exceptions; providing penalties and
 6 enforcement; stating that a public emergency exists and declaring the nature of that emergency;
 7 and generally relating to transparency and public trust in law enforcement.

8 BY repealing and reenacting with amendments:

9 SUBTITLE 18. POLICE.

10 Section 18-124,

11 The Prince George's County Code

12 (2023 Edition; 2025 Supplement).

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County,
 14 Maryland, that Section 18-124 of the Prince George's County Code be and the same is hereby
 15 repealed and reenacted with the following amendments:

16 SUBTITLE 18. POLICE.

17 DIVISION 4. MISCELLANEOUS POLICE MATTERS.

18 Sec. 18-124. [Reserved] Masks or Facial Coverings; Prohibited.

19 (a) Definitions. In this section, the following words mean:

20 (1) Law Enforcement Agency means a federal, state, or local agency, department,

bureau, office, or unit authorized to enforce criminal, civil, or immigration laws in the County.

(2) **Law Enforcement Officer** means an individual who is:

(A) A sworn member of a law enforcement agency; and

(B) acting in the performance of official duties.

(3) **Face Covering** means any balaclava, ski mask, neck gaiter, tactical mask, or any other item that conceals or obscures the face of an individual.

(4) **Protective Equipment** includes:

(A) Respirators, including passive air purifying, powered air purifying respirators, and self-contained breathing apparatus.

(B) Gas Masks, or similar protective masks designed to filter or isolate the wearer from toxic gases, vapors, aerosols, or airborne biological agents.

(C) Hazardous materials protective gear (HAZMAT), including full-face or hooded protective ensembles required for response to chemical, biological, or environmental threats.

(D) Fire-resistant or flame-retardant protective masks, hoods, or face coverings that are an integral component of firefighting or fire-suppression gear.

(b) **Prohibited Conduct.**

(1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, a law enforcement officer shall not wear a face covering while interacting with a member of the public in the performance of official duties in Prince George's County.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this section, a law enforcement officer shall display the officer's name and identification number issued by the law enforcement agency who they represent without obstruction.

(c) **Exceptions.**

(1) **Undercover Operations.** While actively engaged in an undercover operation or covert activity where facial concealment is necessary to protect the officer's identity or safety, with a judicially issued warrant.

(2) **Tactical Operations.** Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) officers or other substantially similar tactical units may utilize gear necessary to protect against physical harm and to perform tactical responsibilities such as hostage rescues, barricade incidents, active assailant situations, and other comparable operations.

(3) **Medical Protections.** When wearing a medical-grade or surgical mask designed to prevent the transmission of airborne diseases or infection.

(4) **Fire or Smoke Gear.** When wearing protective equipment is necessary to perform duties during a fire or fire-related incident.

(5) **Biological or Chemical Agents.** When wearing protective equipment related to protection against exposure to biological or chemical agents during an incident where such agents may be present.

(7) **Water Rescue.** When wearing protective equipment is necessary to perform duties during a water rescue operation.

(8) **Vehicle Helmets.** When a law enforcement officer is utilizing a motorcycle or other vehicle that requires a helmet for safe operations.

(9) **Inclement Weather.** A law enforcement officer may wear facial coverings for warmth. They must remove or adjust the facial covering to comply with this section as soon as reasonably practicable when interacting with a member of the public.

(d) **Penalties.** A law enforcement officer found in violation of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, subject to imprisonment not to exceed six (6) months and up to a five thousand (\$5000) dollar fine.

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SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the provisions of this Act are hereby declared to be severable; and, in the event that any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the remaining words, phrases, clauses, sentences, subparagraphs, paragraphs, subsections, or sections of this Act, since the same would have been enacted without the incorporation in this Act of any such invalid or unconstitutional word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, subparagraph, subsection, or section.

SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that in accordance with the provisions of Section 317 of the Charter, the County Council hereby declares that a public emergency exists affecting the public health, safety, and welfare; said emergency being the threat posed to the community where certain law enforcement officers perform law enforcement functions during encounters with County residents wearing face coverings that conceal or obscure the face, and

1 which serve to substantially erode the public trust.

2 SECTION 4. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Act shall take effect on the date it
3 becomes law.

Adopted this 7th day of April, 2026, by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the
members of the full County Council.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY:


Kystal Oriadha
Chair

ATTEST:



Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council

APPROVED:

DATE: _____ BY: _____
Aisha N. Braveboy
County Executive

THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE HAVING FAILED TO RETURN THIS BILL WITH EITHER
HER APPROVAL OR VETO WITHIN TEN (10) DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF ITS
PRESENTATION TO HER, THIS BILL BECAME LAW ON APRIL 29, 2026

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KEY:

Underscoring indicates language added to existing law.

[Brackets] indicate language deleted from existing law.

Asterisks *** indicate intervening existing Code provisions that remain unchanged.

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