

HOUSE BILL 155

E4

(PRE-FILED)

6lr1226
CF SB 1

By: **Delegates Williams, Lehman, Pena-Melnyk, Behler, Boafo, Charkoudian, Crutchfield, Feldmark, Foley, Forbes, Guyton, Harrison, Hill, Ivey, Kaufman, Korman, Martinez, Mireku-North, Palakovich Carr, Pasteur, Ruth, Schindler, Solomon, Stinnett, Wilkins, Wims, Woorman, Wu, Young, and Ziegler**

Requested: October 16, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to
4 develop a certain model policy prohibiting the use of a face covering by a law
5 enforcement officer in the course of duty; requiring a law enforcement agency to
6 adopt a policy consistent with the model policy developed by the Commission;
7 prohibiting a certain law enforcement officer from wearing a certain face covering
8 while in the performance of duty in the State, with a certain exception; and generally
9 relating to law enforcement officers.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

11 Article – Public Safety

12 Section 3–201(a) and (b)

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to

16 Article – Public Safety

17 Section 3–207(p) and 3–535

18 Annotated Code of Maryland

19 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 Article – Public Safety

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 3-201.

2 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

3 (b) "Commission" means the Maryland Police Training and Standards
4 Commission.

5 3-207.

6 (P) (1) (I) IN THIS SUBSECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE
7 MEANINGS INDICATED.

8 (II) "FACE COVERING" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 3-535 OF
9 THIS TITLE.

10 (III) "LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY" HAS THE MEANING STATED
11 IN § 3-535 OF THIS TITLE.

12 (IV) "LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER" HAS THE MEANING STATED
13 IN § 3-535 OF THIS TITLE.

14 (2) (I) THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP A MODEL POLICY
15 PROHIBITING THE USE OF A FACE COVERING BY A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER IN
16 THE COURSE OF DUTY CONSISTENT WITH § 3-535 OF THIS TITLE.

17 (II) THE MODEL POLICY DEVELOPED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION
18 SHALL INCLUDE LANGUAGE AFFIRMING:

19 1. THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY'S COMMITMENT TO
20 TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND PUBLIC TRUST;

21 2. THAT THE AUTHORIZED USE OF FACE COVERINGS
22 SHALL BE LIMITED TO SPECIFIC AND CLEARLY DEFINED CIRCUMSTANCES; AND

23 3. THAT GENERALIZED AND UNDIFFERENTIATED FEAR
24 AND APPREHENSION ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SAFETY IS NOT
25 SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY THE USE OF FACE COVERINGS.

26 (3) A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT
27 OFFICERS OPERATING IN THE STATE SHALL ADOPT A POLICY CONSISTENT WITH THE
28 MODEL POLICY DEVELOPED BY THE COMMISSION UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS
29 SUBSECTION.

1 3-535.

2 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
3 INDICATED.

4 (2) (I) "FACE COVERING" MEANS ANY OPAQUE MASK, GARMENT,
5 HELMET, HEADGEAR, OR OTHER ITEM THAT CONCEALS OR OBSCURES THE FACE OF
6 AN INDIVIDUAL.

7 (II) "FACE COVERING" INCLUDES A BALACLAVA, SKI MASK,
8 NECK GAITER, OR TACTICAL MASK.

9 (III) "FACE COVERING" DOES NOT INCLUDE:

10 1. A TRANSLUCENT FACE SHIELD OR CLEAR MASK THAT
11 DOES NOT CONCEAL THE WEARER'S FACE;

12 2. A MEDICAL-GRADE OR SURGICAL MASK WORN TO
13 PROTECT AGAINST THE TRANSMISSION OF DISEASE OR INFECTION;

14 3. A MASK OR AN APPARATUS, SUCH AS A
15 SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS, NECESSARY TO PROTECT AGAINST
16 EXPOSURE TO ANY TOXINS, GAS, SMOKE, OR OTHER HAZARDOUS OR HARMFUL
17 ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION;

18 4. A MASK, HELMET, SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING
19 APPARATUS, OR OTHER DEVICE NECESSARY FOR UNDERWATER USE;

20 5. A MOTORCYCLE HELMET WHEN WORN BY AN
21 INDIVIDUAL UTILIZING A MOTORCYCLE OR OTHER VEHICLE THAT REQUIRES A
22 HELMET FOR SAFE OPERATIONS;

23 6. EYEWEAR NECESSARY TO PROTECT AN INDIVIDUAL
24 FROM THE USE OF RETINAL WEAPONS AND LASERS;

25 7. A GARMENT WORN FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES;

26 8. PROTECTIVE GEAR WORN DURING TACTICAL
27 OPERATIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PHYSICAL SAFETY; OR

28 9. ANY OTHER ITEM WORN TO FOLLOW APPLICABLE
29 LAWS ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OR REASONABLE WORKPLACE
30 ACCOMMODATIONS.

3 (I) THE STATE;

4 (II) ANOTHER STATE;

5 (III) A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE OR ANOTHER
6 STATE; OR

7 (IV) THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(4) "LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER" MEANS A SWORN MEMBER OF A
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.

10 (B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER
11 ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN AN UNDERCOVER OPERATION.

12 (C) A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MAY NOT WEAR A FACE COVERING
13 WHILE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF DUTY IN THE STATE, EXCEPT AS AUTHORIZED IN A
14 POLICY ADOPTED UNDER § 3-207(P)(3) OF THIS TITLE.

16 (I) IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS
17 SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 2 YEARS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING
18 \$2,000 OR BOTH; AND

19 (II) WAIVES ALL IMMUNITY IN A CIVIL ACTION BASED ON THE
20 VIOLATION.

(2) A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION CONSTITUTES POLICE MISCONDUCT FOR PURPOSES OF SUBTITLE 1 OF THIS TITLE.

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
24 October 1, 2026.