

**REVISED MOTION BY SUPERVISOR JANICE HAHN  
AND SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH**

December 2, 2025

**Implementing a County Ordinance Prohibiting Law Enforcement Officers from Concealing Their Identities in Los Angeles County Unincorporated Areas**

Since the start of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in early June of 2025, federal agents have conducted violent and indiscriminate attacks on Los Angeles County’s immigrant communities, leading to countless instances where residents, including ones who have not committed a crime, who have been proceeding toward legal residence in the United States, or who even hold visas, have, without due process of law or opportunity for legal recourse, been forcibly taken from their homes and separated from their families. Between the start of the ICE raids on June 6, 2025, through August 26, 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security arrested at least 5,000 purportedly undocumented people in Los Angeles County.<sup>1</sup> The number has increased as the ICE raids have continued.

The federal agents conducting the raids usually wear plainclothes or tactical gear, and they often conceal their identity by wearing masks or balaclavas that cover their faces. When law enforcement officers, whether local, state, or federal, conceal their

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/08/26/secretary-noem-announces-dhs-arrest-5000th-illegal-alien-los-angeles-operations>

**MOTION**

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| MITCHELL | _____ |
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| SOLIS    | _____ |

identity, they create confusion, incite fear, and undermine public trust. In response, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved a motion<sup>2</sup> on July 29, 2025, which directed County Counsel to report back confidentially to the Board in 60 days with draft language for an ordinance that would prohibit law enforcement officers from concealing their identities while operating in the course of their duties, with a few pre-approved exemptions. The ordinance, if approved, would apply to all law enforcement officers operating within unincorporated Los Angeles County. It would, with limited, specified exceptions, (1) prohibit law enforcement officers from wearing any mask or personal disguise while interacting with the public, and (2) require law enforcement officers to wear visible identification and agency affiliation while interacting with the public.

The ordinance is a detailed and thorough response tailored to protect Los Angeles County residents by addressing unreasonable law enforcement tactics, while preserving reasonable ones such as a law enforcement officers' wearing of a face covering as a part of an undercover operation or while actively performing SWAT responsibilities, or their using personal protective equipment like medical masks when sick, or wearing other protective gear that may conceal an officer's identity as required for physical safety.

In an unprecedented moment when Los Angeles County's immigrant communities are under attack, it is essential that the Board implement policies that cement its support for immigrants' rights, and the rights of all people who may interact with law enforcement. It is reasonable to expect all officers – local, state, and federal – to comply with an ordinance that simply requires them to clearly show the public that they actually are law enforcement officers who are acting within the course of their duties. It is in the best interest of Los Angeles County residents for the Board to implement the ordinance that

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<sup>2</sup> <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/205672.pdf>

County Counsel drafted so that it is clear that law enforcement agents within unincorporated Los Angeles County may not conceal their faces and identities when interacting with the public.

‡**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors waive the first reading of, and approve the attached ordinance for introduction, adding Chapter 13.01 (Prohibition of Law Enforcement Officers Concealing Their Identities and Requirement that Law Enforcement Officers Wear Visible Identification) to Title 13 (Public Peace, Morals and Welfare) of the Los Angeles County Code to prohibit law enforcement officers from concealing their identities in Los Angeles County unincorporated areas, absent lawful exceptions.

# # #

JH:kc/cc

## ANALYSIS

This ordinance amends Title 13 – Public Peace, Morals and Welfare of the Los Angeles County Code, by adding Chapter 13.01 – Prohibition of Law Enforcement Officers Concealing their Identities and Requirement that Law Enforcement Officers Wear Visible Identification to:

- Prohibit all law enforcement officers operating within Los Angeles County, from wearing any mask or personal disguise while interacting with the public in the course of their duties within the unincorporated areas, with appropriate pre-approved exemptions; and
- Require all law enforcement officers operating within Los Angeles County, to wear visible identification and agency affiliation while interacting with the public in the course of their duties within the unincorporated areas.

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By



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CS:ah

Requested: 08/15/2025  
Revised: 11/12/2025

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

An ordinance amending Title 13 – Public Peace, Morals and Welfare of the Los Angeles County Code, to add Chapter 13.01 – Prohibition of Law Enforcement Officers Concealing Their Identities and Requirement that Law Enforcement Officers Wear Visible Identification to prohibit all law enforcement officers while interacting with the public in the course of their duties within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County from wearing any mask or personal disguise with pre-approved exemptions and to require all law enforcement officers to wear visible identification and agency affiliation.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles ordains as follows:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 13.01 is hereby added to read as follows:

**Chapter 13.01 PROHIBITION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS  
CONCEALING THEIR IDENTITIES AND REQUIREMENT THAT LAW  
ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WEAR VISIBLE IDENTIFICATION IN LOS ANGELES  
COUNTY UNINCORPORATED AREAS.**

**13.01.010 Legislative Findings.**

**13.01.020 Legislative Intent.**

**13.01.030 Definitions.**

**13.01.040 Prohibitions.**

**13.01.050 Exceptions.**

**13.01.060 Penalty.**

**13.01.070 Identification Requirements.**

**13.01.080 Exceptions.**

**13.01.090**                    **Penalty.**

**13.01.100**                    **Preemption.**

**13.01.110**                    **Severability.**

**13.01.010**                    **Legislative Findings**

A.     The use of facial coverings and disguises by law enforcement officers significantly affects the public's perception of law enforcement, officer-community interactions, and accountability.

B.     Persons reasonably may experience fear or intimidation when approached by officers whose faces are obscured. Such reactions can heighten defensive behaviors and unnecessarily escalate the tension inherent in many interactions between law-enforcement officers and members of the public.

C.     Facial coverings limit the visibility of facial expressions, which are an essential component of nonverbal communication. In high-stress or emotionally charged interactions, a person's inability to read an officer's expression may lead to a misinterpretation of tone or intent, increasing the risk of conflict.

D.     When officers are not readily identifiable, the risk of false personification of an officer increases. Unable to reliably distinguish actual law enforcement officers from imposters, persons will fear to, and sometimes will not, comply with the lawful authority of actual law enforcement officers, again increasing the risk of conflict. Further, the increased risk of false personification of an officer, increases the risk to persons who submit to the purported authority of an imposter of kidnapping, robbery, and rape. The Los Angeles Times reported that two men in Fresno County did pose as law

enforcement agents and filmed themselves harassing local businesses and that several thefts were committed in Orange County by people who were impersonating law enforcement.

E. While certain situations may require the use of face coverings or masks to provide protection against environmental hazards, facial coverings and disguises used by a law enforcement officer during an interaction with the public should not obscure their identity in a manner that impairs review of, and accountability for, their official actions; nor should such coverings be used in a manner that enables or conceals discriminatory or unlawful conduct.

**13.01.020 Legislative Intent.**

To promote transparency, safety, and trust in interactions between law enforcement officers and members of the communities they serve.

**13.01.030 Definitions.**

As used in this Chapter, the following definitions apply:

A. "Facial Covering" means any opaque mask, garment, helmet, headgear, or other item that conceals or obscures the facial identity of an individual, including, but not limited to, a balaclava, a bandana, a tactical mask, a gator, a ski mask, or any similar type of facial covering or face-shielding item. For the purposes of this chapter, any reference to "facial covering" excludes a translucent face shield or clear mask provided that it does not conceal the wearer's facial identity and that it is used in compliance with the employing agency's policy and procedures as set forth in section 7289 of the Government Code, as may be amended; an N95 medical mask or

surgical mask to protect against transmission of disease or infection or any other mask or device, including, but not limited to, air-purifying respirators, full or half masks, or self-contained breathing apparatus necessary to protect against a present, or reasonably imminent risk of exposure to any toxin, gas, smoke, or any other hazardous environmental condition; a mask, helmet, or other device, including, but not limited to, a self-contained breathing apparatus, necessary for underwater use; a motorcycle helmet when worn by an officer utilizing a motorcycle or other vehicle that requires a helmet for safe operations while in the performance of their duties; and eyewear necessary to protect from the use of retinal weapons, including, but not limited to, lasers.

B. "Law Enforcement Officer" means any peace officer as defined in California Penal Code section 830, as may be amended, and any officer or agent of a federal law enforcement agency.

C. "Visible Identification" means identification that conspicuously identifies the name of the Law Enforcement Officer's agency, and either the Law Enforcement Officer's last name or badge number or both.

#### **13.01.040 Prohibitions.**

In the performance of their duties within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, a Law Enforcement Officer shall not wear a facial covering that conceals or obscures their face, and shall not wear a personal disguise, except as expressly authorized in this Chapter.

#### **13.01.050 Exceptions.**

The requirements of section 13.01.040 do not apply to the following:

A. A Law Enforcement Officer subject to one or more of the exemptions set forth in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of section 7289 of the Government Code, as may be amended.

B. Active undercover operations or assignments authorized by supervising personnel or court order.

C. Tactical operations where protective gear is required for physical safety.

D. Applicable law governing occupational health and safety.

E. Protection of identity during prosecution.

F. Applicable law governing reasonable accommodations.

G. An officer assigned to Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) or equivalent team units while actively performing their SWAT responsibilities.

**13.01.060                      Penalty.**

A. A willful and knowing violation of Section 13.01.040 is punishable as an infraction or misdemeanor.

B. The criminal penalties in this Section shall not apply to any Law Enforcement Officer if they were acting in their capacity as an employee of the Law Enforcement Officer's agency and the agency has maintained and publicly posted a written policy pursuant to section 7289 of the Government Code, as may be amended.

**13.01.070                      Identification Requirements.**

A. A Law Enforcement Officer operating within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County shall wear Visible Identification when performing duties that involve interaction with the public.

**13.01.080 Exceptions.**

The requirements of section 13.01.070 do not apply to the following:

- A. A Law Enforcement Officer engaged in active undercover operations or investigative activities.
- B. A Law Enforcement Officer wearing personal protective equipment that prevents display.
- C. Exigent circumstances, involving an imminent danger to persons or property, or the escape of a perpetrator, or the destruction of evidence, including if the officer is responding to those circumstances while off duty.
- D. A Law Enforcement Officer assigned to Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) or tactical team units and actively performing their SWAT or tactical team responsibilities.
- E. A Law Enforcement Officer engaged in protective operations involving elected officials, judicial officers, or other designated dignitaries where the display of identification would compromise the safety, anonymity, or tactical effectiveness of the protection detail.

**13.01.090 Penalty.**

- A. A willful and knowing violation of Section 13.01.070 is punishable as a misdemeanor.
- B. This Section, and the penalties established herein, shall not apply to any law enforcement agency, or its personnel, if that agency maintains and publicly posts a written policy pursuant to section 7288 of the Government Code, as may be amended.

**13.01.100                    Preemption.**

Nothing in this Chapter is to be interpreted or applied so as to create any requirement, power, or duty in conflict with any federal or California State law.

**13.01.110                    Severability.**

If any provision of this Chapter, or any application thereof to any person or circumstance, is found to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this section which can be implemented without the invalid provisions and, to this end, the provisions of this section are declared to be severable. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have adopted this Chapter and each provision thereof irrespective of whether any one or more provisions are subsequently found invalid, unconstitutional, or otherwise unenforceable.

[CH1301CSCC]