

FACE COVERING ORDINANCE

City Council Meeting

November 18, 2025

Agenda Item 16.1

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE USE OF FACIAL COVERINGS IN PUBLIC SPACES WHILE ENGAGED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STOCKTON, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I. FINDINGS AND INTENT.

The City of Stockton has observed an increase in criminal activity involving individuals with face-covering ski masks and other face coverings intended to conceal their identity. Such face coverings hinder law enforcement investigations, pose a public safety risk, and contribute to a heightened sense of fear, intimidation, and insecurity among residents, businesses, and schools in the community. Therefore, the City Council recognizes the need to create an ordinance prohibiting the unlawful use of facial coverings in public spaces while balancing public safety with individual rights and ensuring reasonable exceptions for lawful use of face coverings.

SECTION II. AMENDMENT OF CODE.

Title 9, Chapter 9.18, titled, "PROHIBITED USE OF FACIAL COVERINGS IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SPACES" is added to the Stockton Municipal Code and shall read as follows:

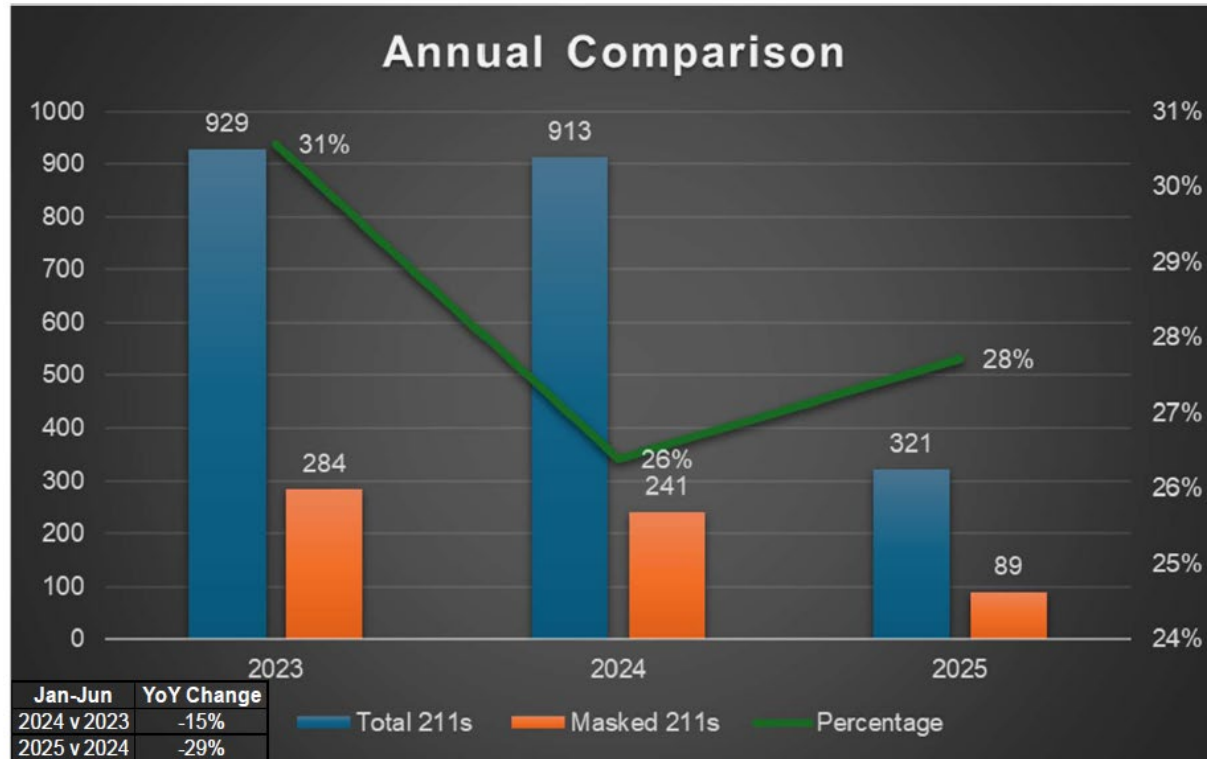
9.18.010 Purpose.

The City of Stockton has observed an increase in criminal activity involving individuals with face-covering ski masks and other face coverings intended to conceal their identity, which has hindered law enforcement efforts and created a heightened sense of fear and insecurity in the community. This ordinance is enacted to protect public safety, promote accountability, and ensure the general welfare of Stockton's residents and visitors.

9.18.020 Definitions.

**JUNE 16,
2025**

Face Covering Robberies January 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025



Data Source: Crystal Report: ARS-Narrative Detail Search. Query Filter: 211 | Original Reports. Date Range: 1/1/2023 - 6/30/2025. Narrative Filter: Mask

CRIME STATISTICS

“Findings and Intent” and “Purpose”

9.18.010 **Purpose.**

The City of Stockton has observed ~~an increase in~~ criminal activity involving individuals with face-covering ski masks and other face coverings intended to conceal their identity, which has hindered law enforcement efforts and created a heightened sense of fear and insecurity in the community. This ordinance is enacted to protect public safety, promote accountability, and ensure the general welfare of Stockton’s residents and visitors.

Philadelphia Ordinance, § 10-616

- Included as Attachment D
- Two Primary Differences
 1. Philadelphia has a monetary fine for violations; and
 2. Subsection four of the Philadelphia identifies specific areas where masks are prohibited.

Monetary Fine

9.18.050 Violations.

- A. In addition to any other remedy allowed by law, any person who violates any provision of this Chapter ~~Violations of this chapter shall be punishable as~~ guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to criminal sanctions as provided in Chapter ~~Section~~ 1.08.010 of this code.
- B. Any person who violates any provision of this Chapter is subject to an administrative penalty in an amount of \$1,000.00.
- C. A person charged with an administrative penalty under this chapter may, within 10 calendar days of the date of the notice, appeal in accordance with Chapter 1.44 of this code. Failure to timely file an appeal constitutes a failure to exhaust available administrative remedies and bars any further review or appeal of the violation.

Specific Locations

9.18.030 Prohibition on Use of Face Coverings in Public Spaces.

It shall be unlawful for any person to wear a face-covering ski mask in any school building, recreation center, daycare, park, City-owned building, or on any mode of public transportation, including, but not limited to, buses, trains, trolleys, and subways ~~any public or private space~~ within the city limits of Stockton with an intent to conceal their identity where the individual knows or reasonably should know that the mask-wearing conduct provokes a reasonable apprehension of intimidation, threats, or violence.

Recommendation

- Review the proposed ordinance reflected in Attachment A and the revisions incorporated into Attachment B.
- Consider the adoption of an ordinance and direct staff regarding which, if any, revisions it would like incorporated into the proposed ordinance.