



Safety and Transparency in Public Authority Act

Health & Safety Committee February 11th, 2026

Problem

Law enforcement agents operating in Denver have increasingly worn opaque face coverings that obscure identity and cause confusion while conducting arrests and detentions.

This practice raises serious concerns about transparency, accountability, and public safety—particularly when individuals are being physically restrained, assaulted or removed from public spaces.

Public safety and trust is compromised when law enforcement officers do not clearly identify themselves.

Solution



Safety and Transparency in Public Authority Act-
Establishes clear minimum standards for visible
identification during law enforcement actions in Denver.

Effective upon passage.

Solution Components

Limitations on facial covering of Law Enforcement Personnel

Prohibits law enforcement from wearing a facial covering while detaining, arresting, or otherwise restraining the physical movement of an individual.

Prohibits law enforcement from wearing a facial covering to conceal identity within a city facility.

Identification of Law Enforcement Personnel

Law enforcement personnel must clearly identify themselves by displaying their name and badge/ identification number.

Any person who does not provide the information requested will be presumed to be impersonating an officer.

Solution: Limitations on Facial Covering of Law Enforcement Personnel

Definition of Facial Covering- “An opaque mask, garment or headgear that conceals or obscures the identity of the agent of office such as balaclavas, gator masks, and ski masks”

Exemptions

This bill will not restrict law enforcement from carrying out:

- Undercover Operations
- SWAT duties
- Tactical Operations
- Emergency Response

This bill will not prevent law enforcement from wearing or using:

- Helmets
- Transparent face guards
- Medical masks
- Protective Eye gear

Solution: Identification of Law Enforcement Personnel

- Identification must be clearly legible from a distance of no less than 25 feet and in a manner that is clearly visible and readable during direct engagement.
- Identification must be worn on the outermost garment or gear and not obscured by tactical equipment, body armor, or accessories.
- Any personnel that does not display their information typically, such as detectives, shall provide their name and badge ID when asked.
- Applies to all law enforcement officials, state, local, and federal.

Exemptions

- Active undercover operations or assignments authorized by supervising personnel or court order.
- Applicable law governing occupational health and safety.
- Applicable law governing reasonable accommodations.

Enforcement

Citations can be issued to law enforcement officers who do not comply with masking or identification standards. Subject to the general penalty in § 1-13(b).

DPD retains the authority to arrest law enforcement officers who do not comply with minimum masking and identification standards.

Ongoing conversation with DPD and DSD regarding enforcement and protocol. Ensuring public safety is most important result in enforcement of this act.

Updates to California Masking Litigation

United States of America v. California – Federal Government sued over two California laws regarding law enforcement masking and identification.

Masking law was enjoined on the basis that it treated federal law enforcement officers differently than other law enforcement officers.

Identification law was not enjoined, on the basis that it treated all law enforcement officers the same.

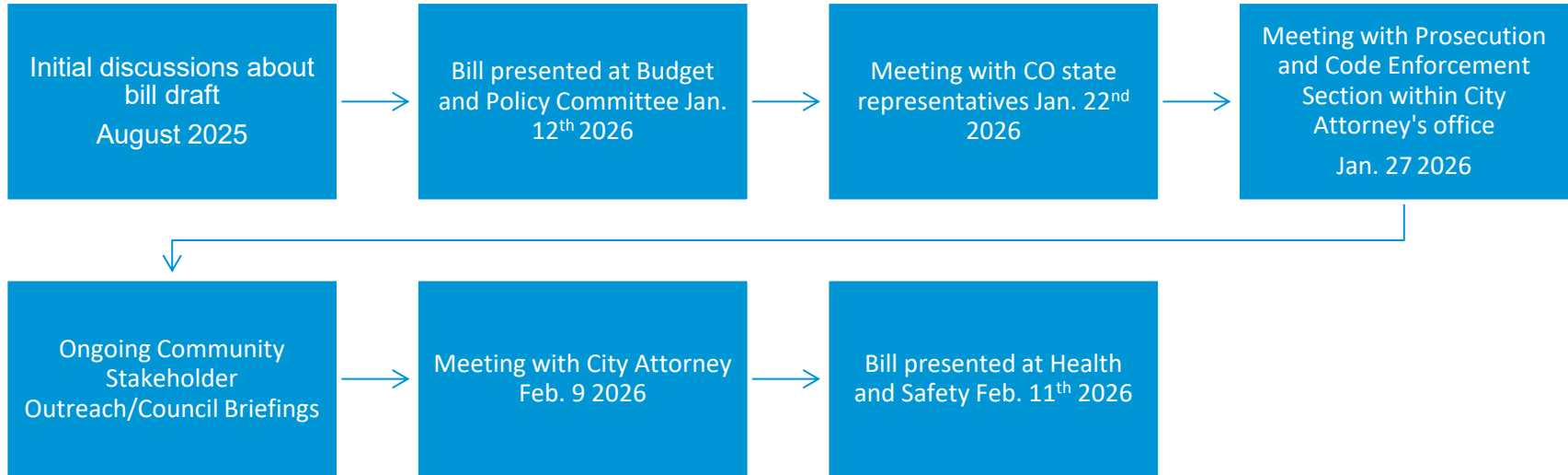
No conflict with the Supremacy Clause

- Preamble that the intent of the law is to not interfere with federal law or 8 USC § 1373.
- No distinctions made between federal, state, or local law enforcement officers.
- Citations of officers failing to comply do not violate federal regulations regarding obstruction.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

- Met with state representatives on 1/22/2026 to ensure municipal and state level policies are complimentary.
- State reps consulted encouraged municipal level policy to proceed.
- Met with Prosecution and Code Enforcement Section on 1/27/2026.

Timeline



Questions?