

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JULY 9, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 24, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 16, 2025

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 627**

**Introduced by Senators Wiener, Arreguín, and Pérez**

**(Coauthor: Senator Caballero)**

**(Coauthors: Senators Becker, Caballero, Gonzalez, McNerney, and**

**Smallwood-Cuevas)**

**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Carrillo, Elhawary, Kalra, and Lee)**

**Lee, and Rogers)**

February 20, 2025

An act to add ~~Section 185.5~~ *Sections 185.5, 13653.1, and 13653.2* to the Penal Code, relating to law enforcement.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 627, as amended, Wiener. Law enforcement: masks.

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor to wear a mask, false whiskers, or any personal disguise, as specified, with the purpose of evading or escaping discovery, recognition, or identification while committing a public offense, or for concealment, flight, evasion, or escape from arrest or conviction for any public offense.

This bill would make it a crime for a law enforcement officer to wear any mask or personal disguise while interacting with the public in the performance of their duties, except as specified. The bill would exempt an officer engaged in an undercover assignment from these provisions. The bill would define law enforcement officer as any officer of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or any person acting on behalf

of a local, state, or federal law enforcement agency. By creating a new crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

*The bill would also require state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies to provide advance notice to any other law enforcement agencies in a jurisdiction in which they will be operating if the planned operation will likely include agency personnel masking, disguising, or otherwise concealing their identities from the public for any reason, as specified.*

*The bill would require state and local law enforcement agencies, on or before July 1, 2026, to adopt a policy to prohibit the use of face masks and disguises by officers, except as specified.*

*By imposing additional duties on local law enforcement agencies, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.*

This bill would declare its provisions to be severable.

~~The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.~~

~~This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.~~

*The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.*

*This bill would provide that with regard to certain mandates no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.*

*With regard to any other mandates, this bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs so mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 185.5 is added to the Penal Code, to read:
- 2 185.5. (a) A law enforcement officer shall not wear any mask
- 3 or personal disguise while interacting with the public in the
- 4 performance of their duties, except for medical grade masks that
- 5 are surgical or N95 respirators designed to prevent the transmission
- 6 of airborne diseases, masks designed to protect against exposure

1 to smoke during a state of emergency related to wildfires, or  
2 protective gear used by Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)  
3 team officers necessary to protect their faces from harm while they  
4 perform their SWAT responsibilities.

5 (b) This section does not apply to an officer while they are  
6 engaged in an undercover assignment.

7 (c) (1) A violation of this section by any person acting on behalf  
8 of a local, state or federal agency, that is not a sworn peace officer  
9 or agent, shall be a misdemeanor.

10 (2) A violation of this section by a sworn peace officer of a  
11 local, state, or federal law enforcement agency, or an agent of a  
12 state, local, or federal agency, shall be an infraction. A second or  
13 subsequent violation shall be an infraction or a misdemeanor.

14 (d) (1) For the purposes of this section, “law enforcement  
15 officer” means any officer of a local, state, or federal law  
16 enforcement agency, or any person acting on behalf of a local,  
17 state, or federal law enforcement agency.

18 (2) For the purposes of this section, “mask or personal disguise”  
19 does not include a face shield if it does not conceal the wearer’s  
20 face.

21 ~~(e) The provisions of this section are severable. If any provision~~  
22 ~~of this section or its application is held invalid, that invalidity shall~~  
23 ~~not affect other provisions or applications that can be given effect~~  
24 ~~without the invalid provision or application.~~

25 ~~SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to~~  
26 ~~Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because~~  
27 ~~the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school~~  
28 ~~district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or~~  
29 ~~infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty~~  
30 ~~for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of~~  
31 ~~the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within~~  
32 ~~the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California~~  
33 ~~Constitution.~~

34 *SEC. 2. Section 13653.1 is added to the Penal Code, to read:*

35 *13653.1. On or before July 1, 2026, all state and local law*  
36 *enforcement agencies in the state shall adopt policies to prohibit*  
37 *the use of face masks and disguises by officers, with exceptions*  
38 *for undercover and Special Weapons and Tactics assignments,*  
39 *and appropriate face shields.*

40 *SEC. 3. Section 13653.2 is added to the Penal Code, to read:*

1     13653.2. *State, local, and federal law enforcement agencies*  
2 *shall provide advance notice to any other law enforcement agencies*  
3 *in a jurisdiction in which they will be operating if the planned*  
4 *operation will likely include agency personnel masking, disguising,*  
5 *or otherwise concealing their identities from the public for any*  
6 *reason. This notice shall be given sufficiently in advance to prevent*  
7 *danger to law enforcement officers based on mistaken identities*  
8 *and shall include when and where they will be operating, their*  
9 *planned actions, and the approximate time and duration of the*  
10 *action.*

11     SEC. 4. *The provisions of this act are severable. If any*  
12 *provision of this act or its application is held invalid, that invalidity*  
13 *shall not affect other provisions or applications that can be given*  
14 *effect without the invalid provision or application.*

15     SEC. 5. *No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to*  
16 *Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution for certain*  
17 *costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district*  
18 *because, in that regard, this act creates a new crime or infraction,*  
19 *eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime*  
20 *or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the*  
21 *Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the*  
22 *meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California*  
23 *Constitution.*

24     *However, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that*  
25 *this act contains other costs mandated by the state, reimbursement*  
26 *to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made*  
27 *pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division*  
28 *4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.*