

Act No 2010-1192 of 11 October 2010 prohibiting the concealing of the face in public

**Article 1**

No one shall, in any public space, wear clothing designed to conceal the face.

**Article 2**

I – For the purposes of the application of Section 1, the public space shall be composed of the public highway and premises open to the public or used for the provision of a public service.

II - The prohibition set forth in Section 1 hereinabove shall not apply if such clothing is prescribed or authorised by legislative or regulatory provisions, is authorised to protect the anonymity of the person concerned, is justified for health reasons or on professional grounds, or is part of sporting, artistic or traditional festivities or events.

**Article 3**

Failure to comply with the prohibition set forth in Section 1 shall be punishable by the fine envisaged for offences of the second category.

The duty to attend a citizenship course as referred to in 8° of Article 131-16 of the Penal Code may be ordered at the same time as, or in lieu of, the payment of a fine.

**Article 4**

Whosoever shall, by means of threats, duress or constraint, undue influence or misuse of authority, compel another person, by reason of the sex of said person, to conceal their face shall be liable to a punishment of one year's imprisonment and a fine of €30,000.

When the offence is committed against a minor, the punishment shall be increased to two years' imprisonment and a fine of €60,000.

**Article 5**

The provisions of Articles 1 to 3 hereof shall come into force upon the expiry of a period of six months following the promulgation of this Act.

**Article 6**

This Act shall apply throughout the territory of the French Republic.

**Article 7**

The government shall lay before parliament a report on the application of this Act eighteen months after the publication hereof. Said report shall put forward the accompanying measures which have been implemented by the public authorities and specify the difficulties encountered.

For further information, see the website  
of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs at  
[www.diplomatie.gouv.fr](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr)



## FRANCE REQUIRES FACES TO REMAIN UNCOVERED

in all public spaces: public highways, public transport, shops and shopping centres, educational establishments, post offices, hospitals, clinics, courts, government buildings, etc.



No one shall, in any public space,  
wear clothing designed to conceal  
the face.”

Act of 11 October 2010 (in force as of 12 April 2011)

For further information, see the website  
of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs at

[www.diplomatie.gouv.fr](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr)

## What does the law say?

No one shall, in any public space, wear clothing designed to conceal the face. (Article 1 of the Act of 11 October 2010)

### The following are still permitted:

- Protective clothing for the face justified on medical grounds;
- Protective clothing for the face justified on professional grounds or used for sporting activities;
- Protective clothing required by law (e.g. helmets for users of two-wheeled vehicles);
- Clothing or accessories not intended to fully conceal the face (e.g. sunglasses, hats).

## Where does it apply?

In all places open to the public: first and foremost the public highway but also public services (courts, hospitals, post offices, town halls, administrative offices, etc.), shops and shopping centres, restaurants, cinemas and theatres, museums, sporting venues, etc. The prohibition also applies to professional or organisations' premises open to the public.

The French national police force and gendarmerie are responsible for ensuring security and public order. This entails ensuring that the law is being enforced and addressing public order offences and breaches of the peace.

The police and gendarmerie must be able to verify the identity of all persons.

## To whom does it apply?

To all persons on French territory, irrespective of gender, age and nationality

## How is it punishable?

### • For a person who conceals his or her face in any public space:

A maximum fine of €150 may be imposed.

### • For a person who compels another person to conceal their face:

That person shall be liable to a punishment of one year's imprisonment and a fine of €30,000. When the person compelled is a minor, these punishments shall be doubled.

To compel a woman, regardless of her age, to conceal her face is an affront to her dignity. It also contravenes the principle of gender equality.

## Does this prohibition restrict freedom of religion?

The Act complies with Article 10 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, which states that: "No one may be disturbed on account of his opinions, even religious ones, as long as the manifestation of such opinions does not interfere with the established Law and Order."

This prohibition does not aim to restrict the exercise of freedom of religion in places of worship open to the public.