



# City of Lake Oswego

## Police Department

### Officer Identification and Facial Coverings

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#### Purpose

The Lake Oswego Police Department is committed to transparency, accountability, and maintaining public trust. This policy establishes clear requirements for officer identification and limits on the use of facial coverings while performing official law enforcement duties.

#### Officer Identification Requirements

While on duty and actively engaged in law enforcement activities, officers shall wear a uniform that clearly and visibly displays:

- The officer's last name or a unique identifying number
- The name of the employing agency
- An officially issued badge

Officers are required to ensure that this identification remains clearly visible to members of the public during law enforcement interactions.

When outer garments or specialized equipment are worn, equivalent identifying information will remain clearly visible.

When immediate compliance is not possible due to emergent or safety-related circumstances, officers will display required identification as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

#### Face Covering Restrictions

Officers shall not wear facial coverings that conceal or obscure their facial identity while performing official duties, except in the specific, clearly defined, and limited circumstances outlined below.

A facial covering includes any mask, garment, helmet, headgear, balaclava, tactical mask, gaiter, ski mask, or other item that obscures an officer's facial identity.

#### Authorized Exceptions

Officers may wear facial coverings only in the following specific, clearly defined, and limited circumstances:

- **Undercover Assignments** - When engaged in undercover duties as part of official law enforcement operations

- **Tactical Operations** - When assigned to a tactical response team and a facial covering is necessary to protect against physical harm
- **Severe Environmental Conditions** - When operating in extreme or severely inclement weather conditions

### **Protective Equipment (Not Considered Facial Coverings)**

The following items are permitted and are not considered prohibited facial coverings:

- Medical-grade masks or respirators used for health protection
- Respiratory or protective equipment used in hazardous environments
- Helmets required for motorcycle or bicycle operations
- Fire helmets used during fire or arson investigations
- Protective eyewear
- Clear or translucent face shields that do not obscure facial identity

### **Election-Related Restrictions**

Officers shall not wear any facial covering while performing official duties within 250 feet of a location where ballots are being collected or counted during an election period.

### **Accountability**

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. The Department will review and update this policy as necessary to remain consistent with Oregon law and community expectations.

### **Public Access to Policy**

This policy is publicly available in accordance with Oregon law and is intended to ensure transparency in law enforcement operations.

This document is a public-facing summary of the Department's internal policy governing officer identification and facial coverings. The full policy is available on the Department's website.

## **Lake Oswego Police Department**

### **FAQ: Officer Identification and Facial Coverings**

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#### **Why did the Police Department adopt this policy?**

This policy implements a new Oregon law (House Bill 4138) designed to promote transparency, accountability, and public trust. The law requires officers to be identifiable during law enforcement interactions and limits when facial coverings may be used.

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#### **How can I identify a police officer?**

While performing law enforcement duties, officers are required to clearly display:

- Their last name (or a unique identifying number)
- The name of the agency (Lake Oswego Police)
- An official badge

This information should be visible during interactions with the public.

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#### **What if I can't see an officer's name or badge?**

In some situations—such as emergencies or rapidly evolving incidents—officers may not be able to immediately ensure all identification is visible.

However, officers are required to display proper identification as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

You may also request an officer's name or identification number during an interaction when it is safe to do so.

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#### **Can police officers wear masks or face coverings?**

In general, no. Officers are not allowed to wear facial coverings that hide their identity while performing official duties, but there are some exceptions.

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#### **When are facial coverings allowed?**

Officers may wear facial coverings only in limited situations, including:

- Undercover operations
  - Tactical or high-risk operations where face protection is necessary
  - Extreme weather conditions (such as severe cold, wind, or dust)
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### **Are medical masks or safety equipment allowed?**

Yes. Certain protective equipment is allowed and is not considered a prohibited facial covering, including:

- Medical masks (such as N95 masks)
  - Respirators or protective gear used in hazardous environments
  - Helmets used for motorcycle or bicycle patrol
  - Fire helmets
  - Clear face shields that do not obscure identity
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### **Are officers allowed to wear face coverings near voting locations?**

No. Officers are not permitted to wear facial coverings while performing official duties within 250 feet of locations where ballots are being collected or counted during an election.

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### **What if I have concerns about an officer's identification or conduct?**

If you have questions or concerns about an interaction with a police officer, you may contact the Lake Oswego Police Department directly.

The Department can review the interaction and, if needed, identify the officer involved.

For Records, call (503) 635-0250. For non-emergencies, call (503) 635-0238. Or visit our website at <https://www.ci.oswego.or.us/police> and complete a 'Contact Us' submission.

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### **Where can I view the full policy?**

The full Officer Identification and Facial Covering Policy is available on the Department's website.

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