

Ordinance #26-0283
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ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 38 OF THE CITY CODE TO
CREATE A NEW ARTICLE VIII ENTITLED “YOUTH PROTECTION”
TO PROTECT JUVENILES BY ESTABLISHING A CURFEW

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that during the summer and early fall months there is an increased incidence of late-night juvenile victimization, disorderly conduct, property crimes, and calls for service involving unsupervised minors; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that a temporary juvenile curfew, subject to reasonable exceptions, will help protect minors, reduce late-night disorder, and promote public safety while preserving parental authority and constitutionally protected activity.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Winston-Salem City Council as follows:

Section 1. Article VIII of Chapter 38 is hereby created to read as follows:

ARTICLE VIII. YOUTH PROTECTION

Sec. 38-135. Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to protect juveniles from victimization and exposure to criminal activity by establishing a curfew for juveniles under the age of 18 years in the city.

Sec. 38-136. Definitions.

For purposes of this article, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

- (a) Direct route. The shortest reasonable path of travel or a commonly used route to reach a final destination without any detour or stop along the way.

- (b) Emergency. An unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action. The term includes, but is not limited to, a fire, a natural disaster, an automobile accident, or any situation requiring immediate action to prevent serious bodily injury or death. This term also includes any action that is reasonably necessary in order to

respond to the medical needs of a family member of the juvenile, regardless of whether the juvenile's action is taken in order to prevent death or serious bodily injury.

- (c) Establishment. Any privately owned place of business operated for profit to which the public has access or is invited, including, but not limited to, any place of amusement or entertainment.
- (d) Guardian. A person who is court appointed to be the guardian of a juvenile.
- (e) Juvenile. Any person under the age of 18 years who is not married or emancipated, or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.
- (f) Owner/operator. Any individual, firm, association, partnership or corporation operating, managing or conducting any establishment, including the employees, members or partners of an association or partnership and the officers of a corporation.
- (g) Parent. A person who is a natural parent, adoptive parent, foster parent, stepparent or another person, or a person to whom legal custody has been given by court order.
- (h) Public place. Any place that is generally open to and used by the public or a substantial group of the public, whether it be publicly or privately owned, including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, highways, alleys, rights-of-way, public vehicular areas and parking lots, transportation facilities, theaters, restaurants, shops, bowling alleys, schools and school grounds, places of business and amusement, playgrounds, parks, similar areas that are open to the public, and other common areas open to or accessible to the public.
- (i) Remain. To linger or stay in a public place, to fail to leave the premises when requested to do so by a police officer, or to fail to leave the premises of an establishment when requested to do so by the owner/operator or employee of the premises.
- (j) Restricted hours. The time of night referred to in this article based upon the prevailing standard of time, whether Eastern Standard Time or Eastern Daylight Savings Time, generally observed at that hour by the public in the city:
- (k) On any day of the week, 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. of the following day for juveniles.

Sec. 38-137. Offenses.

Except as provided by section 38-138, the following offenses constitute a violation of this article:

- (a) A juvenile commits an offense by being present in or remaining in any public place or on the premises of any establishment within the city during the restricted hours.

- (b) A parent or guardian of a juvenile commits an offense if he or she knowingly permits, or by insufficient control, allows the juvenile to remain in any public place or on the premises of any establishment within the city during the restricted hours. The term "knowingly" includes knowledge that a parent should reasonably be expected to have concerning the whereabouts of a juvenile in that parent's legal custody. This requirement is intended to hold a neglectful or careless parent up to a reasonable community standard of parental responsibility through an objective test. It shall, therefore, be no defense that a parent was completely indifferent to the activities or conduct or whereabouts of such juvenile.

- (c) The owner, operator, or any employee of an establishment commits an offense if he or she knowingly allows a juvenile to remain upon the premises of the establishment during the restricted hours. The term "knowingly" includes knowledge that an operator or employer should reasonably be expected to have concerning the patrons of an establishment. The standard for "knowingly" shall be applied through an objective test: whether a reasonable person in the operator's or employee's position should have known that the patron was a juvenile in violation of this article.

- (d) It shall be a violation of this article for any person 18 years of age or older to knowingly aid or abet a juvenile in the violation of subsection (a) of this section.

- (e) It shall be a violation of this article for a parent or guardian who has the ability but willfully refuses to take custody during the restricted hours of a juvenile for whom the parent or guardian is responsible.

- (f) Penalties.
 - (1) A juvenile who violates this section may be subject to being adjudicated delinquent. The court may, in its discretion, impose any dispositional alternatives that are provided in the state juvenile code for any juvenile who is delinquent.

(2) A violation under this section by any other person may be punishable as a Class 3 misdemeanor and be subject to a maximum fine not to exceed \$500.00 pursuant to G.S. 160A-175 and G.S. 14-4.

(g)

Sec. 38-138. Exceptions.

A juvenile who is in a public place or establishment during the restricted hours shall not be in violation of this article if the juvenile is:

- (a) Accompanied by the juvenile's parent or guardian.
- (b) Accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older authorized by the parent or guardian of such juvenile to take the parent's or guardian's place in accompanying the juvenile for a designated period of time and purpose within a specified area.
- (c) On an errand using a direct route, at the direction of the juvenile's parent or guardian, until 10:30 p.m. for juveniles under the age of 18.
- (d) In a motor vehicle with parental consent engaged in interstate travel through the city or originating or terminating in the city.
- (e) Traveling in a motor vehicle with a parent or guardian, or traveling in a motor vehicle with an adult 21 years of age or older authorized by the parent or guardian of such juvenile to take the parent's or guardian's place in accompanying the juvenile for a designated period of time and purpose within a specified area.
- (f) Engaged in a lawful employment activity, or using a direct route to or from a place of employment.
- (g) Reacting or responding to an emergency.
- (h) Attending or traveling to or from, by direct route, an official school, religious, or recreational activity that is supervised by adults and sponsored by a public or private school, the city or other governmental entity, a civic organization, or another similar entity that accepts responsibility for the juvenile.
- (i) Exercising First Amendment rights protected by the United States Constitution such as the free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, and the right of assembly.

- (j) When authorized, by special permit from the chief of police or his designee carried on the person of the juvenile thus authorized, as follows: When necessary nighttime activities of a juvenile may be inadequately provided for by other sections of this article, recourse may be had to the chief of police, or his designee, either for a regulation as provided in subsection (12) of this section or for a special permit as the circumstances warrant. Upon the findings of reasonable necessity for the use of a public place to the extent warranted by a written application signed by a juvenile, and by a parent of the juvenile, if feasible, stating (i) the name, age and address of the juvenile; (ii) the name, address, and telephone number of a parent thereof; (iii) the height, weight, sex, color of eyes and hair and other physical characteristics of the juvenile; (iv) the necessity that requires the juvenile to remain upon a public place during the restricted hours otherwise applicable; (v) the public place; and (vi) the beginning and ending of the period of time involved by date and hour, the chief of police or his designee may grant a permit in writing for the juvenile's use of a public place at such hours as in the opinion of the chief of police may reasonably be necessary and consistent with the purposes of this article.
- (k) When authorized, by regulation issued by the chief of police or his designee in other similar cases of reasonable necessity, similarly handled as set forth in subsection (j) of this section but adapted to reasonably necessary nighttime activities of more juveniles than can readily be dealt with on an individual special permit basis. Normally such regulation by the chief of police or his designee permitting use of public places should be issued sufficiently in advance to permit appropriate publicity through news media and through other agencies, such as the schools, and shall define the activity, the scope of the use of the public places permitted, the period of time involved not to extend more than one hour beyond the time for termination of the activity, and the reason for finding that the regulation is reasonably necessary and is consistent with the purposes of this article.
- (l) A person classified by age as a juvenile but can show proof of student enrollment at a college or university.

Sec. 38-139. Defense.

It is a defense to prosecution under section 38-137(c) that the owner, operator, or employee of an establishment promptly notified the police department that a juvenile was present on the premises of the establishment during the restricted hours and refused to leave.

Sec. 38-140. Enforcement.

- (a) Before taking any enforcement action under this article, a police officer shall ask the apparent offender's age and reason for being in the public place or establishment during restricted hours.

- (b) The officer shall not prepare a juvenile arrest report, issue a citation, or make an arrest under this article unless the officer reasonably believes that an offense has occurred and that, based on any response and other circumstances, no exception or defense in section 38-138 or 38-139 is present.

Secs. 38-140—38-145. Reserved.

Section 2. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption, and is to run until 6:00AM on October 12, 2026.