

State of Minnesota

Minnesota Public Harmony Act

Many parts of this bill should be somewhat familiar. This unifies standard across the State of MN. Clear recurring gathering, statewide approach, equal access requirement and clear tiered penalties.

A bill for an act

relating to public safety; regulating conduct in public spaces; ensuring equal access to publicly funded facilities; establishing permit requirements; providing penalties.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this act is to preserve the daily lives, safety, and cultural harmony of all residents of Minnesota by ensuring that all public spaces remain equally accessible, respected, and free from interference or disruption.

Sec. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. Public space.

“Public space” means any area open or accessible to the general public, including but not limited to streets, sidewalks, parks, schools, and commercial areas.

Subdivision 2. Materially interferes, obstructs, or disrupts.

“Materially interferes, obstructs, or disrupts” means conduct that:

- (1) blocks or significantly impedes pedestrian or vehicular movement;
- (2) restricts or delays access to businesses, schools, public services, or emergency services;
- (3) produces noise, including amplified sound, at a level or duration that unreasonably disturbs or interrupts normal activities; or

(4) otherwise prevents individuals from safely and reasonably using public space for its intended purpose.

Subdivision 3. Recurring gathering.

“Recurring gathering” means any assembly, meeting, or activity occurring two or more times in a patterned, scheduled, or organized manner within a public space.

Subdivision 4. Government funding.

“Government funding” means any financial assistance, grant, subsidy, or other monetary support provided by a state or local governmental entity.

Sec. 3. CONDUCT IN PUBLIC SPACES.

Subdivision 1. General prohibition.

No individual or group shall engage in conduct in a public space that materially interferes with, obstructs, or disrupts the daily activities of others.

Subdivision 2. Specific prohibited conduct.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) blocking pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
- (2) interfering with access to businesses, schools, or public facilities;
- (3) using amplified sound in violation of subdivision 6;
- (4) conducting activities that prevent others from freely accessing or using public space.

Subdivision 3. Permitted activities.

Nothing in this section prohibits peaceful and non-disruptive use of public space, including assembly or prayer, provided such activity does not materially interfere with, obstruct, or disrupt others.

Subdivision 4. Recurring gatherings; permit required.

A recurring gathering in a public space requires a permit issued by the appropriate governing authority. No such gathering may occur without prior approval.

Subdivision 5. Permit standards.

Permits must be issued in a content-neutral and non-discriminatory manner. In evaluating applications, authorities shall consider:

- (1) public safety;
- (2) traffic flow;
- (3) frequency and duration;
- (4) impact on surrounding community and businesses.

Subdivision 6. Amplified sound restrictions.

The use of amplified sound in public spaces, including but not limited to music, announcements, or other broadcasts, is prohibited when it materially interferes with, obstructs, or disrupts the daily activities of others.

Sec. 4. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

Nothing in this act shall be construed to limit the free exercise of religion or personal beliefs within private residences, houses of worship, designated private property, or in public spaces, provided such exercise does not materially interfere with, obstruct, or disrupt the daily activities of others.

Sec. 5. EQUAL ACCESS FOR FUNDED ENTITIES.

Subdivision 1. Equal access required.

An entity receiving government funding must ensure that all spaces, services, or accommodations provided for religious or cultural use remain equally accessible to all groups.

Subdivision 2. Prohibition on exclusive access.

An entity may not grant exclusive access to one group while denying access to another under similar conditions.

Sec. 6. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES.

Subdivision 1. Individual violations.

(a) First offense: warning or fine up to \$500

(b) Second offense: fine up to \$1,500

(c) Third or subsequent: fine up to \$5,000 and possible community service

Subdivision 2. Aggravated violations.

Violations involving public safety risks or obstruction of emergency services may result in fines up to \$10,000 and additional penalties under law.

Subdivision 3. Funded entities.

(a) First violation: notice and 30 days to comply

(b) Second violation: fine up to \$25,000 and suspension of funding

(c) Third violation: termination of funding and ineligibility for future funding

Subdivision 4. Enforcement authority.

The appropriate state or local agency shall enforce this act, investigate complaints, and impose penalties.