

ORDINANCE NO.: 712

AN ORDINANCE OF THE KINGS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO ADD  
ARTICLE XII TO CHAPTER 14 OF THE KINGS COUNTY CODE OF  
ORDINANCES PERTAINING TO UNLAWFUL CAMPING ON PUBLIC AND  
PRIVATE PROPERTY AND OBSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Kings ordains as follows:

SECTION 1: The Ordinance Code of the County of Kings is hereby amended by adding Article XII to Chapter 14 to read as follows:

Article XII – UNLAWFUL CAMPING AND OBSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC  
RIGHTS OF WAY

SECTION 14-204 – Title, Purpose, and Intent.

SECTION 14-205 – Definitions.

SECTION 14-206 – Unpermitted Camping on Public Property Prohibited.

SECTION 14-207 – Unpermitted Camping on Private Property Prohibited.

SECTION 14-208 – Obstruction of Public Access to Sidewalks, Trails, Public  
Facilities, and Other Public Rights of Way, and Other  
Public Offenses.

SECTION 14-209 – Abatement of Encampments and Camp Facilities and  
Materials.

SECTION 14-210 – Enforcement and Remedies for Violation.

SECTION 14-211 – Non-Exclusive Remedy.

SECTION 14-212 – Severability.

**SECTION 14-204 – Title, Purpose, and Intent.**

This Article shall be known as the “Unlawful Camping and Obstruction of Public Rights of Way” ordinance. Publicly accessible areas under the jurisdiction of the County of Kings should be readily available and usable for the safe, healthy, and peaceable enjoyment of the public at large. The use of public areas for camping purposes or storage of personal property interferes with the rights of others to use and access these areas in a safe, healthy, and peaceable manner within the purposes for which they are intended. Except when permitted by law, unauthorized camping on private property without proper sanitary measures adversely affects private property rights as well as the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the County of Kings. The purpose and intent of this Article, in accordance with Penal Code Section 372, is to establish standards and prohibitions for behaviors related to public camping, bathing or other offenses that are detrimental to the preservation of public property and the health, safety and welfare of the public accessing public property or traversing public rights of way, and to ensure and maintain publicly accessible areas in a safe and sanitary manner, and for peaceable use and

enjoyment for the public at large, and to maintain private property in a safe and sanitary condition to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community.

**SECTION 14-205 – Definitions.**

For the purposes of this Article:

A. “Camp” means to place, pitch, establish or occupy camp facilities or materials including but not limited to the laying down of bedding or the use of other camping materials for the purpose of temporarily, irregularly, or permanently sleeping, staying, living, or residing. An activity shall constitute camping or lodging when it reasonably appears, in light of all the circumstances, that the individual(s), in conducting these activities, are in fact using the area as living accommodations regardless of the intent of the individual(s) or the nature of any other activity in which they may be engaging.

B. “Camp facilities or materials” includes but is not limited to, tents, huts, tarpaulins, cardboard boxes, blankets, bedrolls, mattresses, cots, sleeping bags, hammocks, lawn and folding chairs, cooking equipment, warming fires, ice chests, and similar items, or vehicles operable or otherwise.

C. “County Administrative Officer” shall refer to the County Administrative Officer or their designee.

D. “Encampment” shall refer to a place where an individual and/or group is encamped, and or are engaging in camping activities.

E. “Enforcement Officer” means any county employee as designated by the County of Kings with authority to enforce any provision of this Code or related state law, and shall also include, without limitation, mean regularly salaried, full-time employees of the Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator.

F. “Personal Property” means personal effects or property consisting of the following items: identification or social security cards; medications; medical devices; eyeglasses; photographs/photo albums; tax or medical records; and reasonably usable, non-soiled, non-verminous items that are reasonably believed to have value, including tents, blankets, sleeping bags, clothes, and operational bicycles (i.e. complete bicycles, not standalone bicycle parts). The definition of personal property does not include contraband.

G. “Public Property” means all public property including but not limited to, public buildings, streets, sidewalks, trails, alleys, medians, greenways, easements, parks, waterways, canal banks, county highways (as defined in Sts. & Hy. Code, §§ 25, 960.5 and 1480, or as amended), and other rights of way dedicated for public use and lawfully accepted by the County, and other public amenities.

H. “Private Property” means all private property, including but not limited to, real property, yards, private alleyways, sidewalks, trails, private roads, agricultural land, and undeveloped lots.

I. “Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator” shall refer to the Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator or their designee.

J. “Store(ing)” means to put aside or accumulate to use when needed, to put for safekeeping, to place or leave in a location.

**SECTION 14-206 – Unpermitted Camping on Public Property Prohibited.**

A. It is unlawful and a violation of this Code for any person(s) to camp, occupy camp facilities, or use camping materials on public property not specifically designated for day and/or overnight campgrounds.

B. This section shall not apply to public property specifically designated for camping or where camping is an authorized use by a responsible local, state, or federal agency. Persons desiring to camp on County owned, controlled, or maintained public property designated for camping must comply with Article 11, Section 1107 of the Kings County Development Code. Persons desiring to camp on public property owned, controlled, or maintained by a department of the United States, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, or other local public agency must comply with the applicable laws, regulations and permitting requirements of the responsible department of the United States, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, or another local public agency.

C. Nothing in this ordinance shall prohibit the possession or transportation of camping facilities or materials on public property, unless otherwise in violation of this ordinance.

D. Persons desiring to use County-owned grounds or buildings for public meetings and other approved uses must apply for a public use permit as required by Article 11 of the Kings County Development Code.

E. In the situation where an unpermitted camp is erected, written notification of the violation and pending removal of the camp shall be provided in accordance with County policy at least 72 hours prior to an enforcement action as outlined in Section 14-209.

F. No person shall use or occupy any vehicle, including recreational vehicles and camper trailers, for human habitation on public property or private property. Habitation shall be deemed to exist when the totality of the circumstances indicates that a person is using a vehicle as a place of residence or accommodation. Any vehicle parked or left standing upon a public right of way, for 72 hours or more, violates this ordinance. Enforcement Officers shall be authorized to remove vehicles in violation of this ordinance. (Veh. Code § 22651.) Nothing in this ordinance shall prevent Enforcement Officers from removing vehicles where otherwise permitted by law.

G. Nothing in this ordinance shall prohibit the lawful use of vehicles which are properly stored on private property in accordance with Article 13 of Kings County Development Code, or the use of recreational vehicles as a temporary shelter for those

remodeling their homes pursuant to Kings County Development Code Article 11, Section 1107, subdivision (B)(3).

I. Any condition resulting from unpermitted camping on public property that is injurious to health, is indecent or offensive to the senses, or unlawfully obstructs public property, the free passage or use of any navigable lake, river, bay, stream, canal, basin, any public park, square, street, or highway, is a nuisance and may be abated in accordance with Section 14-209.

**SECTION 14-207 – Unpermitted Camping on Private Property Prohibited.**

A. Except as provided in this Section, it is unlawful and a violation of this Code for any person(s) to camp, occupy camp facilities, or use camping materials on private property not appropriately zoned under the Kings County Development Code or authorized by the necessary land use entitlements for camping and camping related recreational activities.

B. Nothing in this ordinance shall prohibit camping on private property by the owner(s), and lessee(s), or other persons including camping-related activities provided, sponsored, and/or facilitated by youth organizations, religious organizations, or private associations provided that such activities comply with all provisions of the Kings County Development Code and all State and County health and sanitation requirements.

C. This Section does not apply to approved employee housing and farmworker housing as defined and authorized in Article 25 of the Kings County Development Code.

D. Nothing in this section shall prohibit camping on private property where camping and camping-related activities are an approved use under the Kings County Development Code and comply with all State and County health and sanitation requirements.

E. In the situation where an unpermitted camp is erected, notification shall be provided in accordance with 14-206, subdivision (E), prior to enforcement action.

**SECTION 14-208 – Obstruction of Public Access to Sidewalks, Trails, Public Facilities, and Other Public Rights of Way, and Other Public Offenses.**

A. No individual shall obstruct a street, sidewalk, alleyway, trail, county highway (as defined in Sections 25, 960.5 and 1480 of the California Streets and Highway Code, or as amended), entrance to public facilities, waterways, or other public right of way (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or as amended) by sitting, lying or sleeping, or using or storing personal property in, or upon any public road or other public right of way.

B. No individual shall obstruct any street, sidewalk, alleyway, trail, county highway, or other public right of way by sitting, lying or sleeping, or using or storing

personal property in, or upon any public street, alleyway, sidewalk, public property, waterways, or other public right of way within the following locations:

1. Five hundred (500) feet of public or private schools, public parks, playgrounds, public or private childcare facilities, and public libraries;
2. Five hundred (500) feet of railroad tracks, railroad property, and railyards;
3. One hundred (100) feet of any roadway overpass or underpass, freeway off ramp or on ramp, tunnels, or bridges;
4. Fifty (50) feet of a fire hydrant, fire plug, or other fire department or fire protection district connection, and any designated fire lanes; and
5. Ten (10) feet of any operational or utilizable driveway or loading dock.

C. Immediate Removal: Any violation of this section shall be subject to immediate removal by Enforcement Officers and peace officers.

D. It is unlawful and a violation of this Code to bathe in public fountains or other public water features or conveyances.

E. It is unlawful and a violation of this Code to urinate or defecate upon public property not designated as a restroom facility.

**SECTION 14-209 – Abatement of Encampments and Camp Facilities and Materials.**

A. Notwithstanding Section 14-208, subdivision (C), the County may abate or remove camp facilities and materials, or an encampment established in violation of this Article after providing at least 72 hours' written notice of such abatement. Any camp facilities and materials, or encampments established in violation of this Article may be subject to abatement without advanced written notice by the County, if the encampment poses an imminent and substantial threat to public health or safety, as determined by the Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator and upon consultation with County Administrative Officer.

B. Abatement pursuant to this section may include, but is not limited to, removal of camp facilities and materials, trash, debris, junk, hazardous waste, infectious waste, and vehicles.

C. Abatement of encampments and camp facilities and materials shall be conducted in accordance with County policy.

**SECTION 14-210 – Enforcement and Remedies for Violation.**

A. Any violation of this Article is declared to be a public nuisance and subject to the penalties stated herein.



SECTION 2: This ordinance shall take effect thirty (30) days after final passage.

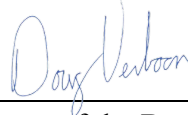
The foregoing ordinance was introduced at a meeting of this Board of Supervisors of the County of Kings held on March 11, 2025, and adopted at a meeting held on March 18, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors: Robinson, Thayer, Neves, Valle, Verboon

NOES: Supervisors: None

ABSENT: Supervisors: None

ABSTAIN: Supervisors: None



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Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors  
County of Kings, State of California

WITNESS my hand and seal of said Board of Supervisors this 18th day of March, 2025.



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Clerk of said Board of Supervisors