



Women Are Force For Change

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Iran's Oppressive Chastity and Hijab Law Strips Women's Rights

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Failure to comply with the mandatory Hijab is equated with "nudity" in the Chastity and Hijab Law and would result in increasingly severe penalties

After eight months of deliberation, the Iranian Judiciary passed the bill on the Chastity and Hijab law to Raisi's government on April 22, 2023. The government passed it on to the parliament on May 21 for final adoption, turning it into legislation. (The state-run Hamshahrionline.ir, May 30, 2023)

The Chastity and Hijab Plan is widely viewed as another instance of the government's oppressive measures against [women and human rights](#). The legislation, which has raised significant concerns, was reported by state media on May 24.

According to the provisions outlined in the bill, failure to comply with the mandatory Hijab is equated with "nudity" and would result in increasingly severe penalties, including fines and the deprivation of social rights. Repeat offenders could face imprisonment ranging from six months to three years.

Furthermore, the Chastity and Hijab bill imposes harsh penalties on individuals associated with non-compliant individuals in vehicles. After two fines, a vehicle can be confiscated, accompanied by a daily fine of 10 million rials.

The proposed law extends its punitive measures to owners and managers of public places, including stores, restaurants, cinemas, sports facilities, recreational venues, and artistic establishments. Penalties for non-compliance include fines, sealing of premises, as well as the loss of tax exemptions and government tariffs.



The [mandatory hijab](#) for women and girls above the age of 9 was established following the 1979 Revolution in Iran. This rule triggered protests that were swiftly suppressed by the new authorities. Over the years, many women have challenged the boundaries of acceptable clothing and defied the regulation, leading to ongoing campaigns against this discriminatory law.

The death of [Mahsa Amini](#), a 22-year-old woman who died in police custody in September under allegations of hijab violation, ignited renewed anger and became a significant challenge for the clerical regime since the revolution. The incident sparked protests across the country, drawing the participation of tens of thousands of Iranians.

According to the bill, socially influential individuals engaged in social, political, cultural, artistic, or sports activities could face bans on their professional and online endeavors for three months to a year for violations. Repeat offenders could be subjected to up to three years of imprisonment.

Amidst the unrest, some religious and government figures have repeatedly advocated for a more stringent approach by the government against offenders, even encouraging a "fire at will" approach towards non-compliant women.

Experts suggest that resistance against the compulsory hijab will continue to grow. It is increasingly seen as a symbol of the state's repression of women and the harsh crackdown on society.

In recent weeks, authorities have intensified their enforcement of hijab rules, leading to the closure of businesses, restaurants, cafes, and, in some cases, pharmacies due to owners or managers failing to comply.



The translation of the full text of the Chastity and Hijab Law follows:

In the Name of God

Explanatory Introduction

Considering the importance of observing social norms in maintaining the health of society and the need to preserve the dignity and moral security of individuals, especially women, as well as the high position of women in the Islamic system and their fundamental role in the consolidation of the family and the development of societies, and acknowledging the harm that ignoring these norms inflicts on society, as well as the duty of the government and the general public to uphold these norms for the well-being of society, the following bill is submitted for the relevant legal protocols.

Bill to Support the Culture of Chastity and Hijab (Supporting Social Health)

Article 1

A. The officers of the State Security Force command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who are considered judicial branch officers responsible for enforcing the law, are obliged to issue warnings to individuals who violate social norms in public or public places or the virtual space, including those who remove the hijab. For the first offense, they should take appropriate action through means such as text messages, utilizing new technologies and intelligent systems.

In the case of a second offense, the perpetrator will be fined an amount equivalent to one-sixth of the maximum fine of the eighth-degree punishment. For a third offense, the fine will be increased to an amount equivalent to one-third of the maximum fine of the eighth-degree punishment, using the aforementioned means by the State Security Force command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, referred to as FARAJA for brevity in this law.

B. In the case of partial nudity of the body or wearing thin, transparent, or tight clothes in public or public places or the virtual space, the perpetrator will be subject to fines equivalent to the maximum monetary penalty of the seventh degree in the first instance, according to the arrangements stipulated in paragraph (A). In the event of repetition, in addition to the above fine, the perpetrator will be referred to the judicial authority and sentenced to the maximum fine and deprivation of social rights of the sixth-degree punishment.

C. Individuals who are fully naked in public or in public places or cyberspace, or who appear with a covering that is considered fully nude by the general public, will be sentenced to the maximum punishment or fined and deprived of social rights of the sixth-degree.

Note 1: If such behavior, as mentioned in this article, is carried out by the driver of a vehicle or its passengers—in addition to the crimes and punishments stipulated in this article—there will be a warning issued twice for impounding the car through the means mentioned in this article. For the third offense, the car will be banned from movement for seven days and fined one million Tomans per 24 hours. On the fourth offense, in addition to the financial fine, the aforementioned vehicle will be impounded for ten days. Any transfer of the vehicle is subject to the payment of these fines.

The operators of public transportation will be obliged to oversee the implementation of this amendment regarding the fleet under their supervision. In the event of a violation, they will be subject to a fine equivalent to the maximum monetary penalty of the seventh degree for the first time. In the case of repetition, in addition to the aforementioned fine, they will be deprived of all discounts, bonuses, and granted exemptions, including tax exemptions and government tariffs, in the provision of public services.

Note 2: If the offender refuses to pay the fine within one month after being notified, the fine will be doubled, and the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be informed, so that the amount of the fine is deducted from the offender's bank account, and they will be notified. If it is not possible to collect the fine for any reason, all banks and credit institutions are prohibited from providing any banking and credit services, including issuing or renewing bank cards, until the said fines are paid.

Note 3: FARAJA is obliged to create the necessary systems to send warnings through appropriate methods, including sending text messages. It should also create the necessary websites for issuing fines, enabling the documentation of violations, submission, and extraction of reports, and providing access to perpetrators, other individuals, and relevant authorities.

Note 4: Individuals who have objections to the warning message or the designated fine can register on the mentioned website and announce their objection within ten days from the date of receiving the warning text message or being notified of the fine. The objection will be examined by a delegation composed of a judge chosen by the head of the Judiciary, a representative from the Interior Ministry, and FARAJA in the legal jurisdiction of the county. The delegation's judge will issue their ruling within a maximum of two months. The issued ruling will be final, and the defendant will be notified. The fines will be collected after the ruling becomes final.

Note 5: If, after being warned or fined, and within the time limit for objection or examination, or within a week, the perpetrator commits to not repeating the violation, the warning and the imposed fine will be suspended for six months. In the event of a violation of the commitment, in addition to the suspended fines, another fine will also be applied.



Article 2: If the actions stated in paragraph A of Article 1 of this law are committed in the systems subject to Article 29 of the Sixth Five-Year Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Plan, by employees of that system or by individuals working or teaching in governmental or non-governmental education or research centers, the offender will be warned by supervisory units such as the security or inspection departments.

If the offense is repeated for a second time, the offender will be fined by deducting one-fifth of their salary and benefits for a period of one to three months by the board examining administrative violations or by the police and disciplinary authorities.

In the third instance, the person will be sentenced to a deduction of one-third of their salary and bonuses for a period of two to six months and the annulment of all benefits, discounts, and exemptions granted, including the predicted quotas.

In the fourth instance, as the case may be, the person will be sentenced to dismissal or a ban on employment for a period of two to six months, and they will be referred to a competent judicial authority for criminal prosecution.

The ruling of this article does not annul Note 2 of Article 2 of the law on the mechanism of examination of offenses and punishment of businesses that sell clothing that contradicts Sharia law or undermines public chastity, which was adopted in 1986.

Note 1: Compliance with the provisions of this article is mandatory for clients of the aforementioned systems. The provision of administrative services to them, as the case may be, in the aforementioned systems, will depend on compliance with the provisions of this law.

disqualify the perpetrator from holding managerial positions for a period of six months to one year.

Article 3: If any owners, managers, and clerks of trades and public places, both governmental and non-governmental, such as stores, restaurants, cinemas, and recreational, artistic, and sports venues, commit the behavior as mentioned in Article 1 of this law, they will receive a notice of closure in addition to the prescribed fines and punishments in the first instance. In the second instance, the relevant places or units will be closed for up to one week by FARAJA enforcement officers or by a competent authority according to professional regulations.

In the third instance, (the business will be closed for) up to two weeks, and (the owners, managers, and clerks) will be deprived of all discounts and granted exemptions, including tax exemptions and government tariffs, in providing public services for a year.

Note: Owners, managers, and clerks of the mentioned units are obliged to take necessary measures, such as installing signs and notices and preventing the entry of individuals, to prevent the commission of the behavior as mentioned in Article 1 of this law by clients and customers. If they fail to do so and the said units become a place for the gathering of people without hijab or engage in other actions against Sharia law, or if the punitive measures indicated in this article do not lead to an improvement in the situation of the said units, FARAJA is obliged to revoke their license through the authorities that issued the permit or license. The perpetrator should be referred to a judicial authority to apply the fourth-degree punishment. The aforementioned individuals will be deprived of obtaining a license or permit to operate in the trade or field related to their previous activity.

Article 4: Whenever personalities who have gained fame through their social, political, cultural, artistic, or sports activities and have a social impact commit behaviors that are addressed in this law, they will be subject to the fines mentioned in Article 1 of this law, as well as the revocation of all benefits, discounts, and exemptions. They will also be deprived of their professional activity or activity in cyberspace for a period of three months to one year upon the ruling of a judicial authority.

If the punitive measures in this article fail to bring about a change and correction of the perpetrator's behavior, they will be sentenced to the sixth-degree punishment as ordered by the judicial authority, in addition to the deprivations mentioned in this article.

Article 5: Individuals who engage in the behaviors described in this law in an organized manner or in collusion with foreign intelligence and security services, if not subjected to a more severe punishment, will be banned from leaving the country for two years. They will also be sentenced to one or two of the punishments listed under Article 23 of the Islamic Punishment Law, as well as fifth-degree imprisonment, in accordance with the committed crime and the conditions and circumstances of the perpetrator.

Note: If the Judiciary's bailiffs, based on evidence, discover that the perpetrator is involved in organized activities or has ties to foreign intelligence and security services, they will refer the matter to the judicial authorities along with the obtained evidence and the opinion of the country's intelligence and security agencies, which, according to the law, are responsible for identifying such matters.



Article 6: Regarding individuals who promote opposition to hijab in cyberspace, in the first instance, FARAJA will issue a warning and delete the virtual page(s) or website. If the perpetrator continues their activity, in the second instance, in addition to deleting the page(s) or website and prohibiting the perpetrator from engaging in any activity in cyberspace for three to six months, FARAJA will impose a fine equivalent to the maximum fine of the fifth-degree punishment. In the third and subsequent instances, apart from imposing fines and the mentioned ban as the punishment for the second instance, the perpetrator will be referred to the judicial authorities and fined or imprisoned according to the sixth-degree punishment. They will also be banned from engaging in any activity in cyberspace for a period of one or two years. If it is not possible to ban the perpetrator from their activities in cyberspace, the monetary fine will be increased by one degree.

Article 7: Individuals who, in any way, display aggression towards women who wear the veil or insult the hijab or any person wearing the hijab through words or actions that contradict their values and dignity, whether in the real world or in the virtual space, will be sentenced to a fine of the fifth-degree and one or two of the punishments mentioned in Article 23 of the Islamic Punishment Law, as approved in 2013. This is in addition to the punishment prescribed in Article 619 of the Islamic Punishment Law, Book 5 on Punitive and Deterrent Punishments.

Article 8: No one has the right to commit criminal acts such as insulting, slandering, threatening, assaulting, or violating the privacy of women who do not observe the hijab under the pretext of "promoting virtue or prohibiting vice." If such acts are committed, the perpetrator will be punished according to the law.

Article 9: The import, production, and wholesale distribution of clothing that contradicts public modesty are prohibited. FARAJA is obliged to confiscate such clothing, close down the related production or distribution units, and take action against the perpetrator to apply the punishments specified in clauses 4 and 5 of Article 2 of the law on how to deal with violations and punish clothing salespersons whose use in public is against Sharia or offends public modesty, as approved in 1986. Additionally, all benefits, discounts, and exemptions granted will be canceled. The perpetrator must be referred to the judicial authorities.

Article 10: Actions taken by FARAJA in enforcing the provisions of this law can be subject to objection, in accordance with Note 5 of Article 1 of this law.

Article 12: All enforcement officers and intelligence and security services are obligated to cooperate with FARAJA in identifying violators of this law and providing the relevant documents.

Article 13: For the effective implementation of this law, FARAJA is obliged to take action to train and recruit reliable and experienced personnel and report on their measures to the heads of the three branches every six months.

Note: In addition to complying with the conditions stated in Article 30 of the Criminal Prosecution Law, FARAJA is required to provide special training for the officers responsible for enforcing this law.

Article 14: The competent judicial authority to handle the crimes mentioned in this law is the provincial Prosecutor's Office and the court of the provincial capital.

Article 15: The executive regulations of this law, which include procedures for sending warnings and electronic notices of confiscation, public access to the confiscation site and bank accounts, handling objections to disciplinary fines, dealing with cases involving prohibited clothing in wholesale or retail, reporting by the public, supervision by prosecutors, and warning employees, will be prepared by the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the President's Legal Deputy, and FARAJA within three months after this law comes into effect. (The executive regulations) will be approved by the head of the Judiciary and subsequently ratified by the cabinet.

Note: The revenue generated from the implementation of this law will be deposited into the National Treasury Account and allocated solely based on the annual budget law to address social issues, including divorce, the welfare of child laborers, support for needy women heading households, as well as the provision of relevant equipment and systems. (Source: Entekhab state-run website – May 24, 2023)

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