

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLE SHADE
ORDINANCE NO. 2025-05

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 142 (PEACE AND GOOD ORDER) OF THE
REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MAPLE SHADE,
NEW JERSEY REGARDING PROHIBITED ITEMS
AT TOWNSHIP SPONSORED EVENTS**

WHEREAS, the Maple Shade Township Council (the “Township”) has a paramount interest in preserving the Township’s public health, welfare, and safety; and

WHEREAS, ensuring and preserving the Township’s safety includes taking reasonable efforts to make all public areas safe for citizens and visitors; and

WHEREAS, there has been an increase in juvenile violence, crime, and other disruptive and potentially dangerous activity in the Township in recent times; and

WHEREAS, the crowds of unruly juveniles which congregated on and near Aces Field and elsewhere within the Township during the 2025 Football Carnival, with one such incident involving approximately one hundred (100) juveniles congregating, failing to disperse, and engaging in widespread acts of fighting and criminal mischief, creating immediate danger to the juveniles, bystanders and the first responders called upon to deal with them; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to ensure public safety and is in the absolute best interest of public health, welfare, and safety to implement new strategies to ameliorate the ongoing and pervasive problems with the formation of these crowds of juveniles and the dangerous and criminal conduct that too often accompanies these gatherings; and,

WHEREAS, the Township has a legitimate interest in promoting the safety and well-being of the Township's youngest citizens, persons under eighteen (18) years of age, whose inexperience renders them particularly vulnerable to becoming participants in unlawful activities, particularly unlawful drug activities, loitering with intent, and the causing of damages to person and property, as well as a heightened risk of being victimized by older individuals with a propensity for unlawful acts; and

WHEREAS, the threat of ongoing congregation of juveniles and others that could turn violent and/or otherwise disruptive to the public health, welfare, and safety of the Township of Maple Shade and its citizens and seasonal visitors, mandates the adoption of measures to reduce the risk of harm and maintain law enforcement’s ability to identify individuals engaged in criminal activity; and

WHEREAS, the carrying of backpacks at Township sponsored events results in individuals potentially introducing weapons and other prohibited items into such event spaces; and

WHEREAS, the allowance of face coverings at or near Township sponsored events impedes law enforcement from protecting the public by masking the identity of individuals potentially engaged in illegal activities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Maple Shade, County of Burlington and State of New Jersey, that Chapter 146, Peace and Good

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Order, of the Revised General Ordinances of the Township of Maple Shade, shall be and hereby is amended to include the following:

§ 142-19 Definitions.

Township Sponsored Event shall include any community event funded partially or fully by the Township of Maple Shade and/or a community event approved by the Township of Maple Shade taking place on Township owned property.

§ 142-6 Regulating the Possession of Certain Items at Township Sponsored Events.

No person shall carry, possess or wear any prohibited items or articles while attending Township Sponsored Events.

§ 142-7 Prohibited Items.

a. All backpacks are prohibited at Township sponsored events. No bag larger than eight inches by six inches by eight inches in depth (8"x 6" x 8"), approximately the size of a half a sheet of paper, such as but not limited to, bookbags, fanny packs, cinch bags, coolers, briefcases, luggage of any kind, computer bags and camera bags or any bag larger than the permissible size as set forth in this section are permitted to be carried on, placed on or be in the vicinity of any Township Sponsored Event.

b. Face coverings and masks are prohibited at Township sponsored events.

§ 142-8 Exceptions.

a. Medical devices/surgical masks necessary for the immediate medical assistance of the patient utilizing such device/mask and bags containing supplies for the care of infants and/or toddlers, at the discretion of law enforcement.

b. Essential equipment for any reporter for broadcast, electronic or printed media operating in a professional capacity for communication to the public.

c. Officers of the Maple Shade Township Police Department, Maple Shade firefighters, emergency personnel and other municipal employees acting in an official capacity shall be exempt from the provisions of this section,

§ 142-9 Warning Where Feasible.

When feasible, excluding exigent circumstances, two warnings shall be given to juvenile and adult persons. Such warnings shall be sufficient if provided orally, by posted signs, or by amplified announcement. Any person, adult, or juvenile, found to be with a prohibited item shall be directed to the nearest exit of the event. The failure to comply with the directions of the enforcement Township Official constitutes a breach of the peace.

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§ 142-10 **Penalty.**

a. Any adult person violating this section shall, upon conviction in the Maple Shade Municipal Court, be liable for a penalty according to the following scheme.

1. For the first offense, a fine of not less than \$750.00 not more than \$1,000.00.

2. For a second offense occurring within one year of a prior violation, a fine of not less than \$1,000.00 nor more than \$1,500.00.

3. For a third or subsequent offense occurring within two years a mandatory fine of \$1,500.00 and a stationhouse adjustment, the length of which will be determined by the Police Department.

b. Any juvenile violating this section shall be provided two curbside warnings and opportunity to remove the item from the Township event and after the second curbside warning shall be subject to a stationhouse adjustment the length of which will be determined by the Police Department and having the juvenile's parent or guardian called to address the matter. In such a case the juvenile's conduct constitutes a breach of peace. No summons or juvenile delinquency charge shall be issued to a juvenile violating the provisions of this section. Nothing in this Section 142-10 shall prohibit law enforcement from bringing charges for violations of any other applicable criminal statutes at their discretion.

NOTICE OF INTRODUCTION

The foregoing ordinance was introduced at a meeting of the Maple Shade Township Council, held on May 22, 2025, and was read for the first time.

This ordinance will be further considered for final passage at a Regular Meeting of the Township Council to be held on June 12, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. at 200 Stiles Avenue, Maple Shade, NJ 08052. Copies of this ordinance will be made available on the township website at: www.mapleshade.com and at the Municipal Clerk's office to members of the general public who request same during normal operating hours. All interested persons will be given the opportunity to be heard concerning the ordinance.