

**ORDINANCE NO. 1774-2025**

**EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDING CODE OF ORDINANCES  
CHAPTER 15 OFFENSES, ARTICLE 3 CURFEW FOR MINORS,  
OFFENSES, DEFENSES AND ENFORCEMENT, ETC.  
SEC. 15-27 DEFINITIONS A. CURFEW HOURS AND SEC. 15-30 ENFORCEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, due to an increase in incidents involving minors during late night hours and in order to preserve the public peace, health and safety, it is necessary to amend the Laurel Code of Ordinances Chapter 15-27. Definitions and Laurel Code of Ordinances Chapter 15-30. Enforcement by Emergency Ordinance to expand the hours and days covered by the curfew and modify enforcement provisions regarding curfew violations of the municipal laws and/or ordinances.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** that Laurel Code of Ordinances Chapter 15-27. Definitions and Laurel Code of Ordinances and Chapter 15-30. Enforcement be amended so that new paragraphs of said Sections read as follows:

**Current Language Reads:**

**Section 15-27. Definitions.**

For the purpose of the Curfew Ordinance, the following terms, phrases, words and their derivations shall have the meanings given herein. When not inconsistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words in the plural number include the singular and words in the singular number include the plural. The word “shall” is also mandatory and not merely directory.

**A. Curfew Hours** means:

- (1) 10:00 p.m. on any **Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday** until 6:00 a.m. of the following day; and

*Source: Ordinance No. 1373-2000, §2A(1), 8-22-00*

- (2) **12:01 a.m. until 6:00 a.m. on any Saturday or Sunday; and**  
(3) 8:35 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on any Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday during the school term in which a compulsory school-age child is to be enrolled in a public or private legitimate non-public school, as required by this Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law (Mississippi Code Annotated, Section 37-13-91, et seq.). This curfew provision applies only to those minors to whom the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law applies

**New Language Shall Read:**

**A. Curfew Hours means:**

- (1)** 10:00 p.m. on any **Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday** until 6:00 a.m. of the following day; and
- (2)** 8:35 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on any Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday during the school term in which a compulsory school-age child is to be enrolled in a public or private legitimate non-public school, as required by this Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law (Mississippi Code Annotated, Section 37-13-91, et seq.). This curfew provision applies only to those minors to whom the Mississippi Compulsory Attendance Law applies.

**Current Language Reads:**

**Section 15-30. Enforcement.**

- A.** Before taking any enforcement action this section, a police officer shall ask the apparent offender's age and reason for being in the public place or establishment. The officer shall not issue a citation or make an arrest under this section unless the officer reasonably believes that an offense has occurred and that based on any response and other circumstances no defense in Section 15-29 is present.
- B.** A police officer of the City who has probable cause to believe that a minor is in violation of Section 15-27, Subsection **A(3)**, of this Ordinance shall transport the minor to a school attendance officer.
- C.** When a child has been transported to a school attendance officer, the arresting officer shall cause to be sent to the minor's parents or guardian by certified mail, written notice of said violation and a copy of this Ordinance. Said notice shall be sent to the minor's parent or guardian at his or her last known address and evident of its mailing as specified shall constitute sufficient notice of the minor's violation.
- D.** A police officer of the City who has probable cause to believe that a minor is in violation of Section 15-27, subsections **A(1) or (2)** of this Ordinance, shall transport the minor to the Police Department.
- E.** When a minor is taken to the Police Department, the minor's parents or guardian shall be immediately contacted. If the minor was violating Section 15-27, subsections **A(1) or (2)** of this Ordinance, the minor shall be held until the parent or guardian arrives at the Police Department to take the minor home. When the parent or guardian arrives, he or she shall be given a copy of this Ordinance. If no parent or guardian has arrived within **one hour**, the minor shall be turned over to custody of the local juvenile authorities until a parent or guardian can take

custody of him or her, and the Chief of Police shall, by certified mail, send to the minor's parent or guardian written notice of said violation and a copy of this Ordinance. Said notice shall be sent to the minor's parent or guardian at his or her last known address and evidence of its mailing as specified shall constitute sufficient notice of the minor's violation.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1281-1996, 9-3-96*

### **New Language Reads:**

#### **Section 15-30. Enforcement.**

- A. Before taking any enforcement action this section, a police officer shall ask the apparent offender's age and reason for being in the public place or establishment. The officer shall not issue a citation or make an arrest under this section unless the officer reasonably believes that an offense has occurred and that based on any response and other circumstances no defense in Section 15-29 is present.
- B. A police officer of the City who has probable cause to believe that a minor is in violation of Section 15-27, **Subsection A(2), of this Ordinance shall transport the minor to a school attendance officer.**
- C. When a child has been transported to a school attendance officer, the arresting officer shall cause to be sent to the minor's parents or guardian by certified mail, written notice of said violation and a copy of this Ordinance. Said notice shall be sent to the minor's parent or guardian at his or her last known address and evident of its mailing as specified shall constitute sufficient notice of the minor's violation.
- D. A police officer of the City of who has probable cause to believe that a minor is in violation of Section 15-27, **Subsection A(1) of this Ordinance, shall transport the minor to the Police Department.**
- E. When a minor is taken to the Police Department, the minor's parents or guardian shall be immediately contacted. If the minor was violating Section 15-27, Subsection A(1) of this Ordinance, the minor shall be held until the parent or guardian arrives at the Police Department to take the minor home. When the parent or guardian arrives, he or she shall be given a copy of this Ordinance. If no parent or guardian has arrived within **three hours**, the minor shall be turned over to custody of the local juvenile authorities until a parent or guardian can take custody of him or her, and the Chief of Police shall, by certified mail, send to the minor's parent or guardian written notice of said violation and a copy of this Ordinance. Said notice shall be sent to the minor's parent or guardian at his or her last

known address and evidence of its mailing as specified shall constitute sufficient notice of the minor's violation.

All other language and provisions of Article III. Curfew for Minors – Offenses, Defenses and Enforcement, ETC, Section 15-27, Section 15-28, Section 15-29, Section 15-30, Section 15-31, Section 15-32 and Section 15-33 remain the same.

#### Section 15-29. Defenses.

A. It is a defense to prosecute under the Ordinance that the minor was:

- (1) accompanied by the minor's parent or guardian;
- (2) on an errand at the direction of the minor's parent or guardian, without any detour or stop;
- (3) in a motor vehicle involved in interstate travel;
- (4) if the minor is legally employed, for the period from forty-five (45) minutes before to forty-five (45) minutes after work, while going directly between his or her home and place of employment. To come within this exception, the minor must be carrying a written statement of employment issued by employer.
- (5) involved in an emergency;
- (6) on the sidewalk abutting the minor's residence or abutting the residence of a next-door neighbor if the neighbor did not complaint to the police department about the minor's presence;
- (7) attending an official school, religious, or civic activity, or other recreational activity supervised by adults and sponsored by the City of Laurel or a civic or religious organization, or another similar entity, which activity will be held on the premises either owned or leased by said entity or owned and operated as an establishment with the adults of said entity and/or the establishment owner taking responsibility for the minor and requiring the minor to remain inside the building on the premises during the curfew hours, except when released to said minor's parent or guardian or said minor is either going to said premises or returning home from said premises, without any detour or stop;
- (8) 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; or
- (9) married or has been married or has had disability of minority removed by a Court of law, or otherwise emancipated pursuant to Mississippi Law; or
- (10) any exception set forth in the text of the Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law, Mississippi Code Annotated, Sections 37-13-91, or as may be hereafter amended; OR
- (11) attending the South Mississippi Fair held annually for one week on the Laurel Fairground Commission property and while on said premises or when going to said premises or returning home from said premises, without any detour or stop.

- B. It is a defense to prosecute under Section 15-28, Subsection (C) that the owner, operator, or employee of an establishment promptly notified the police department that a minor was present on the premises of the establishment during the curfew hours and had been directed to leave and refused to leave during an activity that does not qualify as a defense or exception under Section 15-29 of this Ordinance. CODE Source: Ordinance No. 1281-1996, 9-3-96; 1288-1997, 2-18-97

THEREFORE, in accordance with Mississippi. Code Annotated Section 21-13-11 (1972), and to preserve the public peace, health and safety, these amended ordinances upon unanimous vote of the City Council are effective immediately.

The above and foregoing Emergency Ordinance Amending Code of Ordinances having been reduced to writing was considered as a whole and approved by the Laurel City Council at its meeting of August 5, 2025.

Councilperson Amos moved for approval of the Emergency Ordinance Amending said Ordinances, which motion was seconded by Councilperson Capers.

Upon roll call vote, the result was as follows:

YEAS: Capers, Kelly, Scruggs, Carmichael, Thomas, Amos, Allen

NAYS: None

ABSTAINING: None

ABSENT: None

The motion having received the unanimous affirmative votes of the members present and voting, the President thereupon declared the motion carried, the First Reading approved, and the foregoing Ordinance adopted, this the 5<sup>th</sup> day of **AUGUST**, A.D. 2025.

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PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

ATTESTED AND SUBMITTED TO THE MAYOR BY THE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL ON

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CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

APPROVED ( ) DATE\_\_\_\_\_

VETOED ( ) DATE\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK

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Min. of 8/5/2025; Book No. 104, Page No. \_\_\_\_\_; Agenda Item No. 4A