

## Yo!, No Low Riders Allowed!

### FACTS:

Young men were molested by older and stronger inmates.

They became suicidal because of what happened to them.

Prison officials took away their belts to prevent them from hanging.

That ended up being a symbol that the young man was actually someone's **GIRLFRIEND!!**

This style began in PRISON!

# SAGGERS



This is not cool! It's a disgrace! Sagging is "Not Cool!" It is **unacceptable** to girls, women and ladies!

Thought you'd like to know.

## 'Sagging' Pants Law Unconstitutional

Palm Beach Circuit Judge Paul Moyle ruled Sept. 15th, that a "sagging pants" ordinance in Riviera Beach, FL., was unconstitutional after a 17-year-old was arrested and held overnight in jail.

"We're not talking about exposure of buttocks. No! We're talking about someone who has on pants whose underwear are apparently visible to a police officer who then makes an arrest and the basis is he's then held overnight, no bond," said Judge Moyle.

Supporters of an ordinance outlawing "sagging pants" gathered 5,000 signatures last March to put a proposed ban to a vote. It passed.

"The ordinance was overwhelmingly passed by the citizens." "That city is 80 percent Black and the people were just tired of seeing it. The elders and most of the homeowners were just tired of seeing it."

While many cities around the country are enacting ordinances and laws against the widely popular style of dress called "sagging" or "baggy pants," Riviera Beach, FL., had the distinction of being the first city to arrest someone for the offense and have the law ruled unconstitutional.

With 11 arrests to date, eyes are on Riviera Beach to see what will happen next. Prior to the judge's ruling, according to the law, anyone whose pants were so low that skin or underwear could be seen faced legal action. The first offense carried a \$150 fine or community service. Repeat offenders could have been sentenced to as many as 60 days in jail.

Low Slung Pants a National Nuisance?

In Flint, Mich., chief of Police David Dicks had a similar negative sentiment about the low pants fashion statement. He announced in June that his officers would start arresting people wearing sagging pants that expose "skivvies, boxer shorts or bare bottoms," according to media reports.

Asked if he was concerned about the Florida ruling, Chief Dicks told reporters that officers will keep making arrests, "if the pants are at the knees and you underwear is exposed."

"That is disorderly," Chief Dicks said. "We're not going to sit here and let that happen in Flint."

"Some people call it a fad," Chief Dicks told the Detroit Free Press last summer while patrolling the streets of Flint. "But I believe it's a national nuisance. It is indecent and thus it is indecent exposure, which has been on the books for years."

Last summer, the chief said the crime was disorderly conduct or indecent exposure, misdemeanors punishable by 93 days to a year in jail and/or fines up to \$500.

Chief Dicks, 41 offered an interpretation of the laws: Pants pulled completely below the buttocks with underwear showing is disorderly conduct; saggy pants with skin of the buttocks showing is indecent exposure, and saggy pants, not completely below the buttocks with underwear exposed would merit a warning.

Greg Gibbs, lawyer and chair of the ACLU Flint chapter, agreed with the Florida judge's ruling. "you can't arrest people because of their style of dress," he said.

"We are concerned that the enforcement of the chief's memo may lead to some constitutional violations on a case-by-case basis due to the failure of his memo to define what constitutes indecent exposure," he told reporters.

Many also fear the policy could mean targeting of Black youth. "This is not a Black issue. This is an issue that's in all walks of life," said Chief Dicks, who is Black. "Many people from different ethnic backgrounds and races are doing this fad."

Earlier this year the Department of Justice announced it had reached a settlement resolving allegations of racial discrimination against the owner of Kokoamos Island Bar, Grill and Yacht Club in Virginia Beach. Kokoamos at one point banned patrons who wore braids, twists, cornrows, or dreadlocks, excessively baggy pants and Timberland boots.

After complaints of discrimination became public, local station WAVY-TV aired a news report in which two persons wearing the prohibited boots and loose-fitting pants tried to enter the club. One was Black and the other Caucasian. The Caucasian was allowed in, but not the Black patron. Several places have enacted baggy pants bans including localities in Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey and Illinois. Penalties rang from fines or warnings to jail time. Other communities are considering sagging pants bans. Bans have been rejected in Natchitoches, LA, Stratford, Conn., and Pine Bluff, Ark.