



City of Boston, Massachusetts  
Office of the Mayor  
**Michelle Wu**

February 28, 2022

**TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

Dear Councilors:

I transmit herewith for your approval an Order, An Ordinance Regarding Targeted Residential Picketing, to protect the quality of residential life in our city. The City of Boston (the “City”) has a legacy of supporting activism and free speech. The City also strives to ensure quality of life in every neighborhood. The practice of targeted residential picketing—which means picketing, protesting, or demonstrating, with or without signs, that is specifically directed towards a particular residence or one or more occupants of the residence and which takes place before or about the targeted residence—harasses residents and neighbors in their private homes and communities. Targeted residential picketing that occurs late at night or early in the morning increases the intrusion on the privacy and sanctity of the home, and is particularly harassing and detrimental to the sleep and well-being of families, including seniors and families with children.

The City is committed to the First Amendment right to protest, while upholding our responsibility to safeguard residents’ privacy and the quality of residential life. This proposed regulation regarding targeted residential picketing does not prohibit picketing in residential areas or marches that pass through residential areas. Rather, it applies parameters to protect residents’ well-being through reasonable restrictions on picketing directed at a specific residence only at night and in the early morning. Many other opportunities also exist for individuals to exercise their important free speech rights in the City, such as picketing, protesting, attending marches or rallies, or demonstrating in front of City Hall and other government buildings, on sidewalks, and in public parks and plazas, among others.

This Order will augment existing prohibitions against excessive noise, disturbing the peace, and blocking of streets and sidewalks by providing clear guidelines around targeted residential picketing.

I recommend the adoption of this Order by your Honorable Body.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu  
Mayor of Boston

**CITY OF BOSTON**  
**IN CITY COUNCIL**

**AN ORDINANCE REGARDING TARGETED RESIDENTIAL PICKETING**

*Be it ordained by the City Council of Boston, as follows:*

SECTION 1. The City of Boston Code, Ordinances, is hereby amended in Chapter XVI by inserting the following new section after the existing Section 16-62:

**16-63 An Ordinance Regarding Targeted Residential Picketing**

It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in targeted residential picketing between the hours of 9:00 p.m and 9:00 a.m.


For the purpose of this section, *targeted residential picketing* means picketing, protesting, or demonstrating, with or without signs, that is specifically directed towards a particular residence or one or more occupants of the residence, and which takes place before or about the targeted residence.

Those engaged in targeted residential picketing between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. remain subject to all other ordinances and statutes, including but not limited to laws concerning excessive noise, disturbing the peace, and blocking of streets and sidewalks.

Any violation of this section shall be subject to an order of a member of the Boston Police Department to stop violating this section, and shall be punishable by a fine of one hundred (\$100.00) dollars for the first offense, two hundred (\$200.00) dollars for the second offense, and three hundred (\$300.00) dollars for any third and subsequent offense.

This section shall be enforced by the Boston Police Department.

SECTION 2. This Section 16-63 shall take effect upon passage.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY  
THE FORGOING, IF PASSED IN  
THE ABOVE FORM, WILL BE IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH LAW.**  
**BY**   
**ADAM CEDERBAUM  
CORPORATION COUNSEL**