

GOVERNMENT

California fur ban, first-of-its-kind legislation, goes into effect in 2023

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California makes moves to improve the sustainability of the state with the fur ban. Image credit: Getty

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

As of Jan. 1, 2023, California is the first state in the United States where a state-wide ban on fur is now active.

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Signed into law on Oct. 12, 2019, by Governor Gavin Newsom, [Assembly Bill 44](#) prohibits the sale, donation or production of new fur items within the state. Effective starting this year, the legislation was authored by Laura Friedman of the state's 44th Assembly District.

"The year 2023 marks a historic step forward for California with the implementation of a law that truly represents the values of our constituents," said Assemblymember Friedman, in a statement.

"Californians do not want to see animals live and die in cruel ways for nothing more than fashion, and I'm so pleased that this law will help uphold our state's animal welfare standards as well as potentially help drive innovation for more sustainable fashion alternatives."

Fur good measure

AB 44 went into effect at the top of this year, rendering the law the first at state-level to ban fur within the U.S.

The legislation pertains to any new shoes, bags, clothing, blankets and any other fur products. Refusal to abide by the law will result in civil penalties under California's jurisdiction, with fines starting at the \$500 level for first-time offenders, to \$750 for second offenses, and, finally, \$1,000 for further violations.



While the bill does not regulate all forms of animal products, it will completely ban the sale of new fur products both in person and online. Image credit: Neiman Marcus

Any fur involved in religious practices, or used by Native American tribes, is not considered part of the ban, in an effort to respect the age-old traditions of land protectors and first peoples.

Any used fur, leather, shearling, cowhide, taxidermy items or fur extracted from legal hunts are still not regulated.

U.S. retail sales of fur garments totaled just over \$574 million in 2017 according to the corresponding year's Economic Census. Most sales occurred in California at just under \$129 million, followed by New York with almost \$115 million.

The Humane Society reports that collectively, California and New York made up nearly 43 percent of all fur sales nationwide in 2017.

"We are grateful to California for taking a stand against the cruel fur industry by implementing this statewide ban on the production and sale of new fur products," said Jenny Berg, California state director for the [Humane Society of the United States](#), in a statement.

"The fact that around 100 million animals are still raised and killed in fur factory farms for nothing more than a fur coat, hat or other product is archaic, especially when humane, environmentally sustainable alternatives exist," she said. "We applaud California for leading the fight against fur and sending a powerful message that animals should no longer suffer and die for fashion."

While California is the first state to issue a fur ban, multiple American cities four cities specifically across the state, including Los Angeles in 2018 and San Francisco in 2018, and eight others countrywide, including five Massachusetts municipalities have already banned fur sales.

A litany of luxury brands and retailers including Neiman Marcus ([see story](#)) are working on phasing out the product.

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