

1.2.4. Policy implementation

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In April 2024, Obaidullah Baheer, adjunct lecturer with the American University of Afghanistan, described ‘a constant tug of war’ between what is being decreed and what is actually being enforced in Afghanistan.216 Not all issued instructions been actively enforced,217 and regional variances have been noted.218 This discrepancy stems from the fact that some decisions have not been embraced throughout the Taliban movement,219 and also from influence of local contexts and stakeholders.220 However, several sources noted a general trend of more uniform enforcement across the country, with local variations decreasing.221 The de facto authorities have also created provincial enforcement committees to support the ‘Morality law’s’ implementation in the provinces.222

Despite more systematic and consistent enforcement efforts, some regional variations continued to be reported in 2025.223 These inconsistencies were attributed, in part, to varying norms of local de facto officials224 and the ambiguous wording of some articles in the ‘Morality law’, leaving room for diverse interpretations.225

The vague formulations of issued instructions also create leeway for individual enforcers to be lenient or strict.226 The Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) noted that some de facto officials may go beyond issued restrictions, and for example tell women to wear *burqa* combined with gloves and to always be accompanied outdoors – which is stricter than issued instructions.227

The intensity of the enforcement has moreover varied over time,228 like a ‘wavelike movement’ as described by Afghanistan expert Thomas Ruttig in an interview with ACCORD in October 2024.229 For instance, after the announcement of the ‘Morality law’ in 2024, sources noted an increased presence of enforcers in Kabul City230 and various provinces.231 International Crisis Group similarly noted how the de facto MPVPV come out ‘in full force’ after the announcement of new restrictions, while they at other times ‘are far from omnipresent’232

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