

VareseNews

Asking for charity is annoying. Begging forbidden in Varese

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The war against beggars has returned, and now rose sellers are also involved, but there are no longer the huge fines that outraged even the members of the centre right majority, three years ago. Today, the council approved a new article in the local police regulations, which forbids begging throughout the municipal territory. In particular, **people will no longer be allowed to beg at traffic lights; and chasing after anyone for money, causing “harassment by insistence” will also be considered illegal**, as will offering passers-by cut flowers and little objects. However, anyone that has a valid permit for street-selling is excluded from this ban (some sellers have kept them). The punishment will be a €100 fine, and the goods will be seized. The measure, which was sought by the whole council, was introduced this morning with a modification to Article 38 of the local police regulations.

It should be remembered that the previous council, lead by Attilio Fontana, had already introduced a measure against anyone selling at traffic lights, and beggars. However, this was done on the order of the mayor, which, together with others throughout the country, was invalidated by a supreme court decision which failed to recognise, in these measures, the conditions of urgency or circumstance required by the law. For this reason, the council decided to introduce the ban into permanent regulations that cover the whole municipal territory.

Now, the council has chosen a more moderate policy than the order of 2008 (which was criticised at that time, even by the current town councillor Stefano Clerici), when fines were as much as €3000 for anyone selling without a permit, whereas the new regulation now allows for fines of only €100.

It is clear to everybody that most beggars are foreigners, but the councillor for the local police Carlo Piatti (see photo) explains, “It’s an annoying phenomenon, whoever does it. This is the principle we want to follow, to protect the peace of the people of Varese and punish illegal selling.”

It will be more difficult to understand whether asking insistently for information might be classified as “harassment by insistence”. It will be the police who decide.

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