



# News Release

Mansfield Department of Police  
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**Keith Porch, Chief of Police**

**For Immediate Release**

**Date: March 25, 2020**

**Number: 18**

**Subject: Police Response to COVID-19 Orders**

The Mansfield Division of Police would like to take a moment to encourage our community to follow the Governor's "Stay at Home" order which went into effect this past Monday at 11:59PM. This is an unprecedented time in our country's history and the COVID-19 virus has presented us with challenges we have not faced in our lifetime.

We want you to know that our officers continue to serve the community in a professional manner while performing our duty to serve, while facing the same obstacles that you face. We continue to respond to calls for service and have implemented safeguards to better protect not just our officers from contamination, but the general public as well. We are following the state of Ohio safety recommendations to wash hands, use sanitizer and clean cruisers to help prevent the spread of this deadly virus. On calls for service, we are practicing "social distancing" as directed by the state of Ohio Health Department. If a report can be taken over the phone without the officers personally engaging the public, we are doing so. While we are doing business as usual and enforcing laws, it is not our intent to proactively or randomly stop people to ask where they are going. It is our hope that our community realizes the magnitude of this virus and will abide by the emergency safety precautions put into place. While it is not our primary focus to impose the "Stay at Home" order by the Governor, it is a law and violations can be enforced; however, we prefer to educate rather than cite.

- Officers will not be stopping motorists for the sole purpose of determining compliance with the stay at home order.
- If our officers respond to reports of groups of people congregating or businesses operating outside the requirements of any of the orders, they will use discretion to educate those groups about the importance of complying with the order.
- Each incident will be handled on a case by case basis.

As we work to abide by these best practices, we ask for your patience and understanding as well as to abide by the safety measures that have been put into place to combat the spread of COVID-19. Please STAY AT HOME unless it is necessary to go out. If you do find it necessary to go out, please limit your contact with others and follow preventive measures by washing your hands often and/or using sanitizers. Let's work together to limit exposures and follow the directives put in place so we can move past this epidemic that is sweeping our world.