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City of Bloomington Police Department

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2020

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COVID-19 CONCERNS ALTER SOME OPERATIONS AND SERVICES FOR BLOOMINGTON PD AND CENTRAL DISPATCH

In response to the worldwide COVID-19 situation, Monroe County Central Emergency Dispatch personnel will begin asking preliminary screening questions of those seeking medical assistance where an ambulance might be needed. The questions being asked of callers will be an effort to determine if they have had any known exposure to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) or any symptoms that could be related to exposure to the virus. If the caller indicates “yes”, the emergency personnel responding will be notified so that they can take precautionary measures when dealing with the patient or anyone else present.

In addition, requests for an officer from the Bloomington Police Department for a non-emergency situation or where a police report might be needed could be directed to other options. Those options might include the caller being directed to the Department’s Online Reporting System (*HYPERLINK "https://bloomington.in.gov/incident_reporting/"* https://bloomington.in.gov/incident_reporting/) or an officer taking the report by telephone rather than in person as is commonly done now.

If an officer does respond to a routine call in person to take a report, the complaint may be asked to meet the officer outside or in an open space rather than a confined area.

CALLS FOR EMERGENCIES WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY THESE

CHANGES!

Some services provided at the Department have been suspended in an effort to further minimize exposure to employees and possible introduction of the virus into the building.

Those services **suspended** include:

- Notary Public
- Fingerprinting
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) Checks
- Citation Checks for Equipment Violations or Updated License Plates
- Temporary Beer and Wine Permits (Instead, requests should be sent via e-mail to: *police@bloomington.in.gov*)

Services **not** affected include:

- Vehicle Release (Police Tows)
- Gun Permits
- Public Access Requests
- Clearance Letter
- Criminal History
- Paying Noise Violations

Anyone who has a question about a needed police service from BPD is encouraged to call the Department's non-emergency number of 812-339-4477 and inquire how to best obtain it instead of appearing in the lobby of Police Headquarters.

"All First Responders find themselves in unique circumstances with the COVID-19 situation as we balance our need to provide services and respond to public safety issues while protecting our personnel to the best of our ability. We must take steps to protect those who protect us during this time so that our ability to respond to emergencies is not affected due to a diminished workforce because of exposure to the virus," said Chief Michael Diekhoff.

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