

# **Blacksburg Police Department**

## **Guidelines for Responses**



### **COVID-19**

Chief A. S. Wilson

Captain N.P. O'Dell

Captain B.A. Roe

## **Response and Enforcement Guidelines**

BPD will continue to provide LE services without delay. Officers will need to use discretion and proper application of the enforcement of state laws and local ordinances to minimize risk of unnecessary exposure due to risky social gatherings and behaviors.

Two officers should respond to call for these types of calls for service whenever possible. If dealing with a confrontational individual or group, the secondary officer needs to make sure the primary officer remains professional.

Officer(s) should wear a mask when downtown, on traffic stops, face to face interactions, and in businesses to reinforce that the public health safety is a priority.

### **Masks**

If a complaint is received about someone not wearing a mask, police will only intervene when it turns into a trespassing issue. The first thing the officer(s) should do when they arrive on the scene is to check with management to ensure that the individual in question was told that they had to leave.

### **Bars**

If a complaint is received about a bar/restaurant being over-occupied or not being in compliance with VDH guidelines, the officer(s) will talk to management to keep them informed that a complaint was filed. If the officer(s) does observe a violation, they will write an informational report and forward it to Sgt. Self and Sgt. Craver as they will be the liaison to VDH and ABC.

### **Blacksburg Transit**

If a complaint is received about someone not wearing a mask on a bus, the driver has been instructed not to move the bus and to call their supervisor and LE if the individual does not comply or get off. Officers will again ensure the individual has been told they need to comply or get off the bus and then treat it as a trespass scenario. (Hopefully, the peer pressure of the bus not moving will prevent these incidents)

If any of the above mentioned involve a VT student, a conduct referral is an option as an alternative to summoning/arrest for their non-compliance to state laws, local ordinances and E.O. guidelines. Document the interactions and submit to Lt. Self and Sgt. Craver for the referral.

## **Rental Properties**

When officers respond to Calls for Service in our apartment complexes and rental homes, the following guidelines are provided for an appropriate response:

### **A. Gatherings/Parties:**

- 1) Make contact with residents/tenants and Identify all on the lease
  - a. Disband gathering, get cooperation from residents/tenants
  - b. If uncooperative and a large group, request Fusion Center to make contact with Property Manager/Owner for scene response
  - c. If crowd becomes challenging/confrontational, break contact, notify supervisor, request additional officers and then proceed with disbursement.
    - (1) Follow 2, a & b below
  
- 2) If warranted and at officers discretion, enforce state laws and local ordinances
  - a. Town Code 13-103 - Noise Violation
    - (1) Section 11 -*Large party public nuisance*. A gathering of ten (10) or more people where the gathering is not contained within a structure, but spills outdoors into balconies, yards, common areas, parking lots, or other outdoor spaces, and produces noise that is plainly audible at a distance of fifty (50) feet or more.
  
  - b. State Code – 4.1-305 Underage Possession, 4.1-308 Public Consumption, 18.2-388 DIP
  
- 3) Any gathering/party of 200 or more must obtain permit from BPD, under Town Code 13-106 Mass Outdoor Social Gathering (permits will not be granted for fall semester)

- 4) Complete informational report on enforcement actions and/or report documenting the failure to adhere to physical distancing and mask wearing
  - a. VT Student Conduct notification/referral – automatic if summons/arrests are made, requested if not adhering to E.O. guidelines
    - (1) notification to Lt. Self and Sgt. Craver
  
- 4) Notification of law enforcement response to Property Manager/Owner
  - a. via Lt. Self, Sgt. Craver, and/or Sgt. B. Self