



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

*715 South Broad Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70119*



LaToya Cantrell
MAYOR

"to protect and to serve"

Shaun D. Ferguson
SUPERINTENDENT

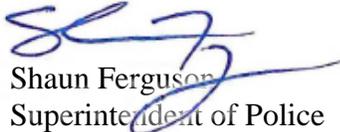
Dear Concerned Citizens,

The New Orleans Police Department shares your goal to maintain public safety, and public health. Our officers currently have the discretion to issue citations and/or summons when possible, rather than taking a person into physical custody for a low level offense. While we intend to keep that practice in place during this public health crisis, we maintain the authority to arrest any individual found to be actively breaking the law, or with outstanding warrants. Each police intervention should be handled based on the totality of the circumstances at that time, rather than a blanket policy that limits the discretion of our officers.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in New Orleans, NOPD leadership has been involved with city, state and federal leaders every step of the way monitoring, and working to mitigate, the rapid spread of the virus. Additionally, our officers in the field have been doing all that they can to prevent further spread among our residents, as well as other first responders and public safety personnel. This includes Sheriff Gusman, who has put measures in place, including pre-screening arrested individuals before they are processed into the facility, and social distancing for those already inside. We will continue to work with the Sheriff and all of our public safety partners to limit the spread of this highly contagious disease, without compromising public safety.

I want you to know that we share your concern for the residents and visitors of this city, as well as our officers and public safety partners. We don't intend to put anyone in harm's way unnecessarily. However, we will do what is necessary to maintain public safety, whether that is issuing a summons, or making a physical arrest. We will continue to instruct our officers toward non-custodial arrest as much as possible, but that decision has to be made based on the situation that they are faced with, not by a blanket ban on arrests for non-violent offenders.

Sincerely,


Shaun Ferguson
Superintendent of Police

"an equal opportunity employer"