



Madison Police Department

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Colleen Clark Bernhardt
Manager, Policy and Practice Innovation
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Hello Colleen,

As you know, the Madison Police Department made several operational adjustments early in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following adjustments made in 2020 continue today and could be sustainable in the future and after the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

- Officers are encouraged to consider citations or other resolutions to situations whenever possible rather than physical arrest. This has been routinely reinforced by supervisors throughout the pandemic.
- Officers are asked to focus traffic enforcement efforts on hazardous traffic violations. This has been reinforced by me early in 2022 as part of my department-wide goals and expectations for the year.
- Officers are not responding to graffiti complaints unless unusual circumstances exist. Complaints are referred to our self-reporting system.

The Madison Police Department and other law enforcement agencies must continue to explore policies, procedures and practices that have influence on our jail population. We all must also encourage and support innovative alternative response models and initiatives. We can't however ignore the impact that ongoing staffing deficiencies, higher than normal attrition levels and lower than normal recruiting numbers are having on the efforts of law enforcement agencies. Deficiencies in staffing make it difficult or impossible to not only sustain current service models, but also to enact policy and practice changes aimed at improving outcomes for our community members.

Building trust and nurturing legitimacy between residents and each agency that makes up our Criminal Justice System in Dane County is critical to the ongoing improvements we all must make to the relationships with our community members. While pursuing innovation and improvement must be supported, we must balance that support with ensuring our agency staffing needs are routinely met and maintained.

Thank you,

Shon F. Barnes
Chief of Police