



STAY HOME, STAY SAFE

On March 26, 2020, I provided operational and enforcement guidance to the members of the Midlothian Police Department in reference to the recently issued “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Order by the Ellis County Commissioner’s Court. For our community’s knowledge and understanding it is our position that Midlothian Police Officers will continue to serve and protect our community with the same commitment and vigilance they do every day. We will continue to proactively patrol our community, investigate potential criminal activity and make necessary contacts as officers observe violations of law that merit an enforcement action.

The recently issued “Stay Home” Order does not provide any additional authority to police officers to stop or contact motorists who are obeying motor vehicle laws. If during a contact it becomes obvious that the motorist is intentionally violating the order, officers have been instructed to explain the seriousness of our current situation and release with a warning. Motorists or individuals who are found to be intentionally and habitually violating the order could face an enforcement action. It is our hope that we do not encounter these situations, but they will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Public or private gatherings are clearly prohibited by the order and MPD Officers will investigate any such activity that apparently violate the order. Enforcement in these scenarios will greatly depend on the circumstances encountered by the investigating officers, but will generally be a last resort in order to gain compliance with the order.

We all understand the incredibly unique situation our Country is experiencing. Normally, this type of action is only taken in response to a natural disaster such as tornadoes, hurricanes, wildland fires, and earth quakes. This is uncharted territory for our generation of first responders, health care providers, school officials and elected officials. It has been decades since our communities have instituted these types of actions outside of a natural or industrial type disaster.

Understandably, there is and will continue to be deep concern, anxiety and even some distrust of government actions. As members of the law enforcement profession, we are one of the most prominent representatives of local government. In this time of uncertainty we will use our presence and authority to continue to build trust and strengthen our relationship with our citizens. Our actions during this time will reflect patience, understanding and perhaps a little grace depending upon the circumstances of each encounter. However, we must hold true to the efforts to prevent our medical facilities from being overrun by the seriously ill due to complications of the Corona Virus. Please continue to stay vigilant in taking all precautions to protect yourself and your family from this disease.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl D. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Carl D. Smith, Police Chief