



Clark County Sheriff's Office

707 West 13th Street • PO Box 410 • Vancouver, WA 98666 • (564) 397-2366 • Fax (564) 397-2367

Chuck E. Atkins, Sheriff

Clark County Sheriff, Chuck Atkins, announces service cuts due to staffing shortages

In a press release in July 2021, I expressed concern about the increasing trajectory of crime in Clark County and decreases in our staffing. We have reached a point where it has become critical in alleviating the strain placed on too few available deputies for the number of calls for service. Service cuts are required, particularly on lower-level issues. I have presented the Clark County Council options to help give immediate relief to our staffing shortages in all branches, in addition to long-term solutions. As of this date, the council has not implemented or enacted any of the suggested changes to help with this staffing crisis. We can no longer sustain the patrol calls for service workload with the current deputy sheriff staffing shortage.

Starting March 31, 2022, Clark County patrol deputies will no longer respond to the following types of calls for service, as listed below. These calls will be diverted to our online reporting program or direct the caller to report the incident to our desk deputy during regular business hours.

The service cuts are as follows:

- Theft of property under \$750 (misdemeanor) where there is no suspect information (this does not include robberies or theft of vehicles or guns)
- Theft from a vehicle where there is no suspect information
- Minimal damage and/or graffiti to property where there is no suspect information
- Minor crimes (property damage, behavioral issues, mutual fighting) involving juveniles at our local schools, when restorative justice measures and administrative measures are available to the school
- Non-life-threatening harassing phone calls (does not include incidents that are related to domestic violence and/or stalking)
- Fraud, scams, or identity theft, less than \$5000 (victims can utilize online reporting)
- Simple assaults reported after they have occurred, where there is nothing beyond transitory pain or minor injuries

www.clark.wa.gov/sheriff

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- Reports that do not require immediate police presence and/or enforcement of criminal law (information only reports)
- Lost/found property that does not represent a safety concern for the public or an imminent threat (this does not include dangerous drugs or weapons found)
- Trespassing where the property owner does not want to press charges
- Trespassing on public lands, forest property, county property (unoccupied), and state-owned property
- Minor traffic and/or parking complaints, and neighborhood problems with no crime nexus
- Welfare checks on homeless persons or mentally ill persons where there has been no observed crime and no imminent threat to the public

Never in my forty-year law enforcement career, until last year, would I have imagined the Clark County Sheriff's Office having to take such measures. As a public safety servant, I am responsible to ensure that we have the resources necessary to fully serve the public safety needs of the Clark County community. I have communicated to the County Council the urgency of taking immediate action with staffing solutions so that we can adequately protect and safeguard our community.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Chuck Atkins

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