



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Fraternal Order of Police

Lodge #9

PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, January 11, 2024

Open Letter to the Charlotte Community FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA] On Monday, January 8, 2024, the Charlotte Housing, Safety, and Community Committee met to discuss criminalizing certain city ordinances that have an impact on public health and safety. In a 3-2 vote, this measure passed the committee and will head to the city council for further discussion. We are concerned about the dissenting opinion and comments made by Councilmember Tiawana Brown who suggested that giving police arrest powers to enforce these ordinances will result in force being used against non-compliant persons. As citizens, visitors, and business professionals visit Uptown Charlotte, none should be forced to bear witness to anyone publicly relieving themselves or masturbating in the streets, sidewalks, and alleyways. The fact that there is opposition to criminalizing these ordinances up for discussion is beyond frustrating.

What is clear is that what is currently being done has failed and is the reason these Ordinances are once again up for review. The ordinances include:

- soliciting from street/median
- unauthorized persons in parking lots
- trespass of vehicles
- loitering for drugs
- masturbation in public
- urination/defecation in public
- consumption/possession of beer/wine in public

While these offenses may seem harmless on a small scale, they are detrimental to the health and safety of our communities at the scale they are physically occurring at. Uptown Charlotte smells like human waste in places due to the excrement and urine left by those without respect for others or our city. There was a shooting at Romare Bearden Park as the New Year was being celebrated. Citizens should not be accosted by panhandlers as they wait in traffic congestion, nor should they be expected to deal with an increase in juvenile-related incidents, car break-ins, or other crimes plaguing this city.

The officers of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department need tools to ensure these acts can be stopped when committed. The Fraternal Order of Police understands that some of these behaviors have a mental health and substance abuse component to them, but our governmental leaders have failed to show that a long-term solution exists that will alternatively reduce these behaviors. Our courts have the discretion to provide outlets that do not include long-term jail sentences; however, jail may be a deterring option for reoccurring offenders.



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We have a serious issue in Charlotte; today CMPD released the 2023 year-end crime stats which show crime in the form of percentages. What those percentages will not show is each victim, family, and loved one left behind and how these crimes have impacted them. We must stop pandering and work together on legislation, resources, and outlets that truly make our communities safer. Abiding by the law has nothing to do with one's financial status, so the motion that this criminalizes the poor is baseless.

This letter is for every business owner, employee, customer, and citizen who has been negatively impacted by persons involved in any of these activities. We ask that you copy and paste the email addresses below and send an email to all City Council members asking them to support criminalizing these ordinances to provide the tools necessary to the police who work to keep our city safe.

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As a note of interest, CMPD statistically has not made mass arrests for violations of these ordinances; however, officers have the discretion to issue a criminal citation. The below data was provided to the Committee by CMPD and is reported in their Minutes (tap the graph).

Select Arrests by CMPD Officers - By Year, By Charge Type
 CMPD Jurisdiction
 1/1/2018 - 8/31/2023

ARREST CHARGE	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
BEGGING / PANHANDLING	37	22	11	3	0	0
OPEN CONTAINER / PUBLIC DRINKING	45	32	22	11	8	6
PUBLIC INDECENT EXPOSURE / PUBLIC SEX ACT	9	17	20	13	16	16
URINATE IN PUBLIC	10	6	4	4	6	1

*Data for 2023: 1/1-8/31
 Arrests based on charge code and keyword search of on-view charge descriptions. Charges are misdemeanor or infraction (not felonies). Select arrests may have additional charges associated with arrest.

Select Misdemeanor and Infraction Citations Written by CMPD Officers - By Year, By Charge Type
 CMPD Jurisdiction
 1/1/2018 - 8/31/2023

CITATION TYPE	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
BEGGING / PANHANDLING	225	140	46	9	2	0
DEFECATE IN PUBLIC	0	0	2	0	0	0
OPEN CONTAINER / PUBLIC DRINKING	161	75	46	10	13	14
PUBLIC INDECENT EXPOSURE / PUBLIC SEX ACT	5	5	5	5	10	12
SLEEPING IN PUBLIC / UNLAWFUL CAMPING	2	1	4	1	5	0
URINATE IN PUBLIC	43	33	20	7	10	3

*Data for 2023: 1/1-8/31
 Citations based on charge code and keyword search of charge descriptions. Charges are misdemeanor or infraction (not felonies). Select citations may have additional charges associated with citation.

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The FOP is an organization representing law enforcement members with training, leadership, and support for our members. With nearly 2,000 members, we are a united voice within Charlotte-Mecklenburg working together for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. We also work on legislation that makes our communities safer. It is our mission to further promote the values of the law enforcement profession and work with the community and governmental leaders to make Mecklenburg County a safe place to live, work, and enjoy! If you would like more information or have questions, please email us at fop9@ncfoplodge9.com.



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