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Gurbir S. Grewal
Attorney General



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For Immediate Release:

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AG Grewal and Colonel Callahan Issue Daily COVID-19 Enforcement Update

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police, announced the following recent enforcement actions related to COVID-19, including those involving individuals in violation of Governor Murphy’s Executive Order 107:

Cases Involving Additional Offenses

- **Megan Murray, 28, of Monroe Township**, was charged on Tuesday, April 14, by the South Brunswick Police Department with two counts of second-degree endangering the welfare of a child, DWI, numerous motor vehicle violations, and violating the emergency orders. Shortly after midnight, a vehicle operated by Murray was found stopped in a lane of travel on Georges Road. Murray was found intoxicated and sleeping in the vehicle with two young children inside.
- **Alexander C. Bross, 30, of Ocean View**, was charged early this morning by the Upper Township Police Department with DWI and violating the emergency orders.

Other Violations of Executive Orders, Including “Stay at Home” Order

- **Newark Enforcement.** The Newark Police Department’s COVID-19 task force issued 90 summonses for violations of the emergency orders and ordered seven non-essential businesses closed in enforcement actions yesterday, April 16.
- **Kim Pagan of Toms River** was charged by the New Jersey State Police with violating the emergency orders by organizing a prohibited event today in Trenton in which protesters gathered outside the State House and at other locations in Trenton to demonstrate against the Governor’s Executive Orders.
- **Jeffrey Hernandez, 32, of Paterson**, was charged on Wednesday, April 15, by the Paterson Police Department with violating the emergency orders at the carwash he owns on East 27th Street, BWT Shine 4 Less, where officers found employees washing cars by hand.
- **Antoni Moore, 31, Gary Smith, 19, and Onir Ritzie, 26, all of Morristown**, were charged last night, April 16, by the Morristown Police with violating the emergency orders. Officers responded at 10 p.m. to a report of a fight outside an apartment on Clyde Potts Drive. About 12 people were gathered outside, but most of them dispersed when police arrived. The apartment door was open and the three defendants, who do not reside in the apartment, were inside.

- Elizabeth Police charged seven individuals at various times yesterday with violating the emergency orders for continuing to loiter at the corner of Jackson Avenue and Bond Street after **police warned each of them about violating the Executive Order. Police charged Larhonda Burgess, 57, Kevin Lewis, 65, Pearl Moore, 54, James Williams, 55, Syrenner Frazier, 51, Carolyn Dixon, 58, and Herman Kuc, 53.** Burgess received three summonses, and Moore received two summonses. The other individuals each received one summons.

The defendants who were charged strictly with violating the emergency orders and who do not face more serious charges were charged by summons— they were not arrested. Those cases will be adjudicated in municipal court.

“Our police officers are working bravely and tirelessly every day to protect us during this health crisis. Regrettably, they are being called upon far too often to deal with people violating the emergency orders— or what is more egregious, people using the virus to spread fear or impede officers in their vital work,” said Attorney General Grewal. “Staying home and maintaining social distance isn’t just the best advice to stay healthy, it’s the law. Make no mistake, we will do everything in our power to keep our residents and officers safe, and that means we won’t hesitate to file charges against violators.”

“Law enforcement and medical professionals are on the frontlines of this battle to protect the citizens of New Jersey from the COVID-19 virus, and we cannot stress enough how important it is that each person follow the guidelines set forth in the Executive Order,” said Colonel Patrick Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police. “Because lives are at stake, enforcement action will be taken without hesitation against those who are blatantly placing the lives of others at risk.”

Violations of the emergency orders constitute a disorderly persons offense carrying a potential sentence of up to six months in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000. However, violators can potentially face criminal charges including second, third, and fourth degree indictable offenses.

Police have charged a number of persons with second-degree terroristic threats during an emergency for claiming to have COVID-19 and threatening to infect law enforcement officers or others by coughing, spitting, or otherwise exposing them. Second-degree charges carry a sentence of five to 10 years in state prison and a fine of up to \$150,000.

The charges are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

If you are seeing a lack of compliance with the Governor’s emergency orders in your town, please contact your local police department or report here [covid19.nj.gov/violation](https://www.covid19.nj.gov/violation)

The Attorney General’s Office and New Jersey State Police will continue to work with law enforcement throughout New Jersey to deter non-complaint behavior.

No one should take advantage of this pandemic to further their own biased agendas. COVID-19 is no excuse to promote anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and or other biased stereotypes. Please report bias crimes at **1-800-277-BIAS**.

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