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Gurbir S. Grewal
Attorney General



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For Immediate Release:

April 19, 2020

Office of The Attorney General

- Gurbir S. Grewal, *Attorney General*

New Jersey State Police

- Colonel Patrick Callahan, *Superintendent*

For Further Information:

Media Inquiries-

Peter Aseltine
609-292-4791

Citizen Inquiries-

609-984-5828

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 Orders:

Assaults and Threats Against Police Officers, EMTs, or Others

- **Robert Schaub, 35, of Lindenwold**, was arrested yesterday, April 18, by the Somerdale Police and charged with second-degree terroristic threats during an emergency. Schaub had been prohibited from entering the Wawa store in Somerdale after a recent incident in which he was charged with trespassing there. On April 13, he entered the store again, and a clerk who recognized him told him to leave. Schaub allegedly threatened to spit on the clerk, telling her he had the coronavirus and hoped she would get it and die. Police identified Schaub and arrested him last night. He allegedly was uncooperative and refused to be fingerprinted at the jail.

Other Criminal Charges Involving Indictable Offenses

- **John Abdullah, 57, of Somerdale**, was arrested yesterday, April 18, by the Mount Ephraim Police and charged with third-degree aggravated assault on an officer, fourth-degree resisting arrest, shoplifting (disorderly persons offense) and violating the emergency orders. Abdullah allegedly shoplifted candy from the Rite Aid on the Black Horse Pike, and when he was approached by a police officer, he led the officer on a foot chase, causing the officer to be injured.

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

- **Newark Enforcement.** The Newark Police Department’s COVID-19 task force issued 30 summonses for violations of the emergency orders and ordered one non-essential business closed in enforcement actions yesterday, April 18.
- **Cristobal Sanchez, 62, of Plainfield**, the owner of the Tequila Club restaurant and bar on East 5th Street was charged last night, April 18, by the Plainfield Police with serving alcohol to patrons inside the bar in violation of the emergency orders. Police received a report that the bar was open and found three patrons seated at the bar consuming alcohol. A few additional patrons were seated at tables. Sanchez was present and indicated that because the patrons were waiting

for take-out orders, he thought he was allowed to serve them alcohol inside the premises.

- **Trennaja Robinson, 26, Nyajah Levister, 22, Angela Dominguez, 22, and Nicole Thomas, 25, all of Passaic,** were charged yesterday, April 18, by the Passaic Police with violating the emergency orders. Police responded shortly after 1 a.m. to a report of a group of individuals involved in an altercation in the first block of 4th Street. Police observed the defendants in a verbal dispute and asked them to disperse. They allegedly refused to disperse and caused a disturbance. They were not near their homes and had no essential reason to be at the location.
- **Wilson Caraballo, 41, of Paterson,** was charged yesterday, April 18, by the Paterson Police with violating the emergency orders for loitering outside a store in the 300 block of Main Street with no essential reason for being there. He was warned several times before about this conduct.

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.

On April 1, Attorney General Grewal announced enhanced charges against six people who were charged with assaulting law enforcement officers and violating the emergency orders. Specifically, those enhanced charges included making terroristic threats during a state of emergency, which is a second degree offense carrying a sentence of five to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$150,000. Fifteen additional defendants, including Robert Schaub, have been similarly charged since that time for alleged assaults and threats against police officers, emergency medical technicians, or others.

Third-degree charges carry a sentence of three to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$15,000, while fourth-degree charges carry a sentence of up to 18 months in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000.

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

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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