



# CHRISTIANSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## \*\*\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*\*\*

### Safety Advisory and Request for Information

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(Christiansburg, Virginia) – The Christiansburg Police Department was made aware via media reports that there have been several incidents throughout the New River Valley of someone impersonating a police officer.

The media report indicated that several motorists have been stopped by a small vehicle with no markings but displaying only one visor mounted blue light. The report also indicated that at least one of the false traffic stops occurred in Christiansburg. However, at this time, no incidents of this nature have been reported to the Christiansburg Police Department.

The Police Department recognizes that incidents of this nature undermine the public's trust in the police officers serving the community and further, that these incidents create serious safety concerns for both citizens and officers. As such, the agency thoroughly investigates all such incidents and we are asking that anyone with knowledge of the incident described in the media report or any incidents of this type contact the police department as soon as possible.

Additionally, the Department recognizes that incidents like this can cause members of the community to feel fear and uncertainty if they are approached or pulled over by legitimate police officers. In light of this, the Department offers the following advice. If you are approached or stopped by an officer, look for the following:

- The officer should be wearing or displaying a badge that actually says "Police" or "Deputy Sheriff" and bears the name of the locality.
- The uniform worn will have the badge and a nametag clearly displayed. It will also have shoulder patches bearing the name of department or locality the officer is working for.
- Cars may be marked or unmarked, but typically have more than one emergency light.
  - If the car is fully marked with law enforcement insignia and striping and equipped with numerous emergency lights and siren and the officer is wearing a full uniform and displaying a badge of authority, the odds that this is not a legitimate officer are very slim.
  - Marked law enforcement vehicles will have the word "Police" "Sheriff" "Deputy Sheriff" or "Trooper" on them and will the name of the locality or agency displayed as well.
- Officers will provide their name and unit number upon request.
  - Most volunteer this information at the beginning of the encounter.
- If someone tries to pull you over and you have doubts that it is actually a legitimate law enforcement official, there are several options available.

-If you have a cell phone, dial 911 and tell them that someone is pulling you over and give your name, location and vehicle description. When describing your location, include the street name and

any nearby landmarks or businesses. The dispatcher will should be able to confirm fairly quickly if this is a legitimate stop.

-Drive to a well-lit, populated area or business and pull into the parking lot before stopping. Do not speed up or make numerous rapid or erratic turns, just continue at a lawful speed or slightly slower and stop as soon as it is safe to do so. If the officer asks why you didn't stop immediately, explain your concerns and that you wanted to wait until you were at a safer spot to stop.

-If neither of the first two options is readily available, drive to the nearest police station to stop.

- In any of the above circumstances, if you notice more and more police cars joining the pursuit, blocking intersections, etc., you should safely stop as soon as possible and follow the instructions given. The likelihood that you are being stopped by multiple police impersonators with access to several vehicles equipped with emergency lights is extremely remote.

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