



CITY OF MUSCATINE
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PRESS RELEASE

MUSCATINE POLICE DEPARTMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 18, 2020

SEARCH CONTINUES FOR POLICE IMPERSONATOR

Police seek public help in investigation of individual impersonating officer

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The Muscatine Police Department and the Muscatine County Sheriff's Office are continuing their investigation of an individual who is impersonating a police officer in the Muscatine area.

"We continue to investigate reports of an individual impersonating a police officer in the Muscatine area," Muscatine Police Chief Brett Talkington said. "If you are pulled over and are unsure if it is a police officer, call 911 for verification."

The Muscatine Police Department and the Muscatine County Sheriff's Office continue to look for a white male, described as 30- to 40-years-old, that has been impersonating a police officer over the last few weeks.

The suspect has been wearing black clothing and a black stocking cap, and reportedly driving a dark passenger car, possibly a Ford Focus.

The individual has allegedly been stopping vehicles with a blue and red type flasher system on his dashboard.

“If you are stopped and you question the legitimacy of an officer we request that you call 911 immediately,” Muscatine Police Chief Brett Talkington said. “The dispatch center can confirm if it is a valid stop. If you are suspicious, lock your doors and do not get out of your vehicle until you get confirmation from 911.”

If the officer is in a marked cruiser, and displays flashing lights, a driver should pull over promptly when it is safe to do so.

“If someone is behind you and you are not sure they are a police officer, slow down, put your hazard lights on, head toward a lighted area where you will be safer, and call 911,” Talkington said.

Talkington urged anyone with any and all information about the suspect or who would like to report any vehicle that they believe to be suspicious to call the dispatch center at (563) 263-9922 or, if an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.

Those who impersonate police officers erode the public’s trust in law enforcement and may endanger unsuspecting people. There are several tips you can remember to protect yourself during a traffic stop while helping your police officers do their jobs.

1. Make sure it is a marked police unit. If it is not a marked unit, the emergency lights should be built in and are usually not a temporary light placed on the vehicle. You may call 911 to verify that an unmarked police car is in your area.
2. Try to stop in a well-lit area or a location where there are a lot of people present.
3. Turn on your emergency flashers but don’t turn off your car.
4. Do not get out of the vehicle to meet the officer. Officers usually don’t like this anyway.
5. Lock your door.
6. Look for a uniform, official department jacket, and other equipment used by police officers for the performance of their duties.
7. If the officer is in plainclothes, look for identifying clothing and equipment. If unsure, explain to the “officer” that you are unsure about the situation and ask them to display official department identification and badge. Ask where they work and if you can contact their dispatch center to confirm their identity. You may also request a marked patrol unit respond.



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8. Pay attention to what they are asking. Most officers will advise you of the reason for the stop and request your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance.
9. If they immediately tell you to get out of the car without any preliminary questions, be suspicious.
10. Trust your instincts. If they don't seem to be a real police officer they are probably not.