

New Bern Police Department

Recognizing Suspicious Activity

RECOGNIZING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY AND HOW TO REPORT IT

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLES: Vehicles can be considered suspicious if they are:

- ❖ Slow moving with headlights turned off
- ❖ Following a course that appears to be aimless or repetitive – especially if occurring around a school, park or playground
- ❖ Parked cars containing one or more persons, especially at an unusual hour
- ❖ Abandoned vehicles
- ❖ Containing weapons
- ❖ Property in vehicles – especially suspicious when the property includes items not normally found in vehicles.

What are the possible significances of these types of vehicles?

The subjects(s) may be:

- ❖ Casing with the intention of committing a robbery or burglary
- ❖ Involved in drug activity
- ❖ A sex offender

Other types of suspicious activity involving vehicles can be:

- ❖ Subjects attempting to forcibly enter a locked car
- ❖ Subjects detaching mechanical parts or accessories for a vehicle
- ❖ Business transactions conducted from a vehicle, especially if near a park or school and involving juveniles
- ❖ Subjects being forced into vehicles
- ❖ Objects thrown from vehicles, especially while traveling at high speeds

What are the possible significances of these types of activities?

The subject(s) may be involved in:

- ❖ Burglary, theft or malicious mischief
- ❖ Drug sales
- ❖ Business license violation
- ❖ Kidnapping
- ❖ Disposal of contraband
- ❖ Garbage dumping

SUSPICIOUS PERSONS: People can be considered suspicious if they are:

- ❖ Going door-to-door in residential areas – look for subjects checking to see if front doors are locked, especially when another subject remains near the street as a lookout
- ❖ Non-residents going into back or side yard of a house

- ❖ Waiting in front of a house or business – this can be especially suspicious if owners are absent or the building is closed
- ❖ Forcing entrance to or tampering with a residence, vehicle, etc
- ❖ Running from property
- ❖ Carrying property – if someone is carrying valuable property or if it is at an unusual hour
- ❖ Unfamiliar subjects to the neighborhood – or subjects that seem to have no purpose wandering about
- ❖ Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms

What are the possible significances of these types of people?

Subject(s) may be involved in:

- ❖ Casing homes or businesses
- ❖ Soliciting violations
- ❖ Burglary, theft, vandalism, or trespassing
- ❖ Fleeing the scene of a crime
- ❖ Drug activity

SUSPICIOUS SITUATIONS: Some examples of Suspicious Situations include:

- ❖ Continuous “Repair” operations at a non-business location
- ❖ Property being removed from or placed into vehicles or buildings – suspicious when from homes in which the owners are known to be absent or from closed businesses
- ❖ Open or broken doors or windows – at closed businesses or residences in which the owners are absent
- ❖ Unusual noises – including gunshots, screaming, fighting, abnormally barking dogs, anything that suggests foul play, danger or illegal activity
- ❖ A large amount of human traffic to and from a certain residence
- ❖ Accumulation of large amounts of valuable property in homes, private garages, storage areas, etc

What are the possible Significances of these types of situations?

They may involve:

- ❖ Stolen property, possibly being stripped, repainting, or otherwise altered
- ❖ Business license or zoning violations
- ❖ The scene of a burglary in progress or completed burglary
- ❖ Assaults, fights, threats, etc
- ❖ Drug activity

WHEN SHOULD I USE 9-1-1?

9-1-1 should be reserved for emergencies to keep the lines available. Here is a list of examples of times to use Emergency 9-1-1:

- ❖ A person’s safety is in immediate peril
- ❖ A crime is in progress

- ❖ A fight is occurring with a gun, knife or other weapon
- ❖ Serious injury needing immediate response
- ❖ Armed robbery
- ❖ A traffic accident with injuries has occurred
- ❖ Any threat where immediate response is required; when you cannot be placed on hold

WHEN SHOULD I USE THE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER?

The New Bern Police Department non-emergency dispatch number is (252)633-2020. This number should be used to report incidents that have already occurred or when no immediate danger is present and the suspects are long gone.

Here is a list of common examples of when to call the non-emergency number:

- ❖ Suspicious activity where suspects have left
- ❖ Crime that has already occurred and a report is needed
- ❖ Traffic accidents where no one is injured and no traffic hazard exist
- ❖ To make contact with a specific officer

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

Some things that you are going to have to tell a dispatcher when you call either 911 or the nonemergency number are:

- ❖ Location of incident
- ❖ Name if you prefer
- ❖ Nature of the call
- ❖ If weapons are involved
- ❖ Accurate description of suspect of vehicle
- ❖ Direction of travel

Remember; never hang up until the dispatcher tells you to.

CAN I REPORT ANONYMOUSLY?

Yes! When reporting a crime or suspicious activity, tell the dispatcher that you wish to remain anonymous, if you feel the need. Ask that the officer not come to your door, but can call you if they require further information.