



City of La Verne

NEWS RELEASE

October 2, 2023

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City Council Votes to Join with Other Los Angeles Cities Seeking Injunction for Zero-Bail Schedule to Safeguard Public Safety

LA VERNE, CA – The City of La Verne, in partnership with 11 other cities across Los Angeles County, took a strong proactive measure to protect public safety by seeking an injunction against LA County Superior Court in its implementation of a new bail schedule that took effect on October 1, 2023. Under this new schedule, individuals arrested for a variety of misdemeanors and non-violent felonies may now be cited in the field and released with a notice to appear in court with no individual assessment of the risk to public safety. That court appearance could be weeks, if not months, following the incident. This change undoubtedly poses a threat to public safety due to a glaring absence of any oversight or accountability for an entire group of serious offenders, raising significant concerns within the community and among local law enforcement agencies.

“The Zero-Bail policy is a significant public safety concern as our residents and businesses are increasingly victimized by these lower-level offenses,” stated Mayor Tim Hepburn. “This decision to pursue an injunction is based on the joint commitment of a growing list of cities who believe this lack of regard for public safety imperils the safety and security of our residents, businesses, and law enforcement personnel.”

The new bail schedule applies to a broad range of offenses including car thefts, car burglaries, thefts of property of any value, retail and commercial thefts and burglaries, possession of stolen property, forgery, and drug sales among others. For certain cases involving individuals who pose a "greater risk to the public," including sexual battery, crimes against children or elders, contact with minors with an intent to commit a sexual offense, and those involving guns, a "magistrate review" will be conducted electronically by an on-call judge to assess the arrestee's criminal history and other factors. This review will determine whether immediate release, with a notice to appear in court later, is more appropriate than detention in jail.

Law enforcement personnel are often unaware of an arrestee's prior citation(s) for similar offenses in other jurisdictions. While La Verne is one of the safest cities in the San Gabriel Valley, there are growing examples that the County's zero-bail schedule poses an imminent threat to public safety, particularly where someone arrested for a crime while utilizing the new zero bail procedure gets released immediately on a citation and re-offends prior to their court date from the first arrest. The City of La Verne, and the other proponents of this injunction, remain steadfast in our commitment to public safety and will vigorously challenge policies that lessen our ability to protect the community.

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