

To: City Council

From: Debbie Laurie

Date: March 22, 2024

RE: Homelessness Crisis Protocols by Law Enforcement Agencies

In 2021, the State of Maine adopted [Title 17-A, §18: Homelessness crisis protocol \(maine.gov\)](#). The law requires that "a person who lacks a home who commits a listed offense because the person lacks a home must be treated in accordance with the homelessness crisis protocol adopted by the responding law enforcement agency". The City of Bangor Police Department complied with this requirement. While the law does not require a public discussion of the policy, this policy was reviewed publicly at a City Council workshop on March 28, 2022 (a copy of which is attached) and therefore comes back for public discussion as we approach the two-year timeframe.

The requirement by the State of Maine to adopt a protocol did not significantly alter our department response to calls. Each situation a law enforcement responds to requires a level of professional judgment, our officers employ this daily. Observations and discussion are a determining factor in determining the response required.

Members of the public were concerned by the contents of a recently released flyer created by the Greater Bangor Housing Coalition that incorrectly states that "cops should not arrest you or give you a citation for any of the above listed crimes". The list provided includes criminal trespass, possession of a scheduled drug, public drinking, indecent conduct, disorderly conduct. As stated earlier, officers do and will continue to utilize their professional judgment in determining the appropriate response.