



Huntington Beach Police Department

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Julian Harvey, Chief of Police

Press Release

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Huntington Beach Police Department Statement Regarding Unlawful Assembly Incidents May 21-23, 2021

This past weekend, the Huntington Beach Police Department (HBPD) deployed significant resources in anticipation of and in response to large gatherings resulting from a viral TikTok social media post that garnered nearly 200 million views. In that posting, a party was promoted to take place in Huntington Beach on Friday, May 21st, and Sunday, May 23rd. For Saturday, May 22nd, the event was advertised to take place outside of Huntington Beach.

For all three nights, the HBPD developed and maintained an enhanced deployment and action plan, which included contingencies for mutual aid support should it be necessary.

HBPD's preparation for the potential influx of party-goers included notification to partnering agencies and businesses in the downtown area. On Friday, May 21st, approximately 400-500 people gathered in various locations including on the beach south of the downtown area, and in the area surrounding the pier. HBPD declared an unlawful assembly due to the unruly actions of the group and the crowd was dispersed without incident.

On Saturday, May 22nd, a group assembled on the beach south of the downtown. Later that evening, a much larger group assembled in the area immediately around the pier. The disruptive and unruly group eventually engaged in criminal conduct, as the crowd swelled to around 2,500 people. The HBPD declared an unlawful assembly and efforts were made throughout the night to disperse the crowd, while partner agencies were called in to support the response. Ultimately, nearly 150 individuals were arrested and order was restored.

On Sunday, May 23rd, approximately 200 individuals gathered in the downtown area. Due to the use of illegal/dangerous fireworks and other unruly criminal conduct, an unlawful assembly was declared and officers from the HBPD and our partner agencies worked together to disperse the large group without significant incident.

Due to the tireless work by officers of the HBPD and our partner agencies throughout these events, impacts were limited. While businesses in the downtown area were unfortunately vandalized, no significant injuries were reported. There was also minimal property damage, consisting mostly of graffiti to storefronts, and vandalism to a few police vehicles.

“Thankfully no officers were injured over the course of these dynamic and challenging incidents. I am proud of the men and women in our department for their work over the weekend and would like to thank the Mayor, City Council, and community for their ongoing support of the Huntington Beach Police Department,” said Chief of Police Julian Harvey. “It is due to their support that the HBPD has the resources needed to make Huntington Beach one of the safest cities in the nation.”

Throughout the weekend, nearly 180 arrests were made for various charges including failure to disperse, vandalism, curfew violations, and the firing of illegal/dangerous fireworks.

Chief Harvey emphasized, “These arrests make clear that while we encourage everyone to visit Huntington Beach and enjoy the many things that make our city a premier destination, the safety and security of our community is paramount. Unlawful, disruptive conduct will not be tolerated.”

In the coming weeks, Chief Harvey will be meeting with representatives from various social media platforms, including TikTok, to discuss the events that transpired as we work to identify ways for law enforcement to collaborate with these sites going forward, so as to minimize the potential for incidents such as this to happen again in the future.