

PRESS RELEASE



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TORRANCE MAYOR AND POLICE CHIEF SHARE MESSAGE REGARDING CITY'S COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SAFETY

"We have entered a very sad state when youth visit our community and cause harm and havoc. Crimes committed by youth or adults that are pre-planned and organized to loot and destroy property are not acceptable. Our criminal justice system must address these crimes so we don't have these events repeated without serious consequences. We can and must be better. The coordination and response from our police department and their regional partners is appreciated by our Torrance community."

- City of Torrance Mayor George K. Chen

"The lawless acts we witnessed tonight do not reflect the values of our Torrance community. The Torrance Police Department and our regional law enforcement partners remain committed to quelling these disturbances and restoring order as quickly as possible."

- Torrance Police Chief Jay Heart

This is in response to an Incident at Del Amo Fashion Center on December 30, 2023, at approximately 4:31 PM. Torrance Police Officers were on foot patrol at the Del Amo Fashion Center when they observed a group of juveniles engaging in disruptive behavior. As Torrance Police Officers assisted with addressing the initial group of disruptive juveniles, additional groups continued to amass in various locations throughout the area and displayed increasingly disruptive behavior.

Given the increasing number of approximately 1,000 juveniles and the escalating disruptive behavior, including the injury of a Torrance Police Officer, we sought mutual aid. Torrance Police Department was promptly assisted by a strong coalition of neighboring law enforcement agencies, including the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Sherriff Department, Inglewood Police Department, Hawthorne Police Department, Gardena Police Department, El Segundo Police Department, Palos Verdes Estate Police Department, Culver City Police Department, Manhattan Beach Police Department, Hermosa Police Department, Redondo Beach Police Department, and a helicopter from the Los Angeles Police Department Air Support Division.

Ultimately a skirmish line was formed, the juveniles were given a dispersal order and they were directed off the mall property and away from surrounding businesses. While this was occurring, Torrance Police Officers and assisting Neighboring Law Enforcement agencies responded to thirty-four business in which additional separate disruptive groups of juveniles had gathered and needed to be removed.

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During this incident, we learned there were two injuries. One juvenile suffered a minor injury, and one Torrance Police Officer suffered a minor injury, both were treated and released at the scene. Five juveniles were arrested (3 females and two males). One of the juveniles' cities of residence was undetermined at the time of arrest; the remaining four resided in Los Angeles, Hawthorne, Compton, and Gardena. None of our Business Community members reported any incidents of looting. Although there were 911 calls regarding disruptive juveniles indiscriminately throwing bottles, no significant vandalisms were reported.

The Torrance Police Department will continue to maintain our dedicated presence at the Del Amo Fashion Center, which includes marked black and white police vehicles, motor officer units, and police officers on foot patrol, supported by the Torrance Police Department Real Time Response Center and the Drones as a First Responder program. We encourage our community members to stay engaged and sign up for Torrance Alerts to receive emergency notifications and up-to-date information regarding Torrance. In addition, our community members are invited to engage directly with Chief Jay Hart in a "CHAT" with the Chief, which is held every month.

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