



Sheriff Tim Ryals

Chief Deputy Matt Rice

To our community:

As you know, President Trump and Governor Hutchinson have declared a public health emergency, and the COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. We must be proactive and take precautions now to mitigate the spread of the virus in our community.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), social distancing is believed to be one of the most effective methods of preventing the spread of COVID-19. In an effort to prevent the introduction and/or the spread of the virus and to ensure the safety of our community, employees, and detainees, the Faulkner County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) is following CDC guidelines and has implemented the following temporary changes:

- » The county judge has closed Faulkner County offices to the public in effort to minimize the exposure and spread of the virus. This decision was not made lightly and is for the protection of our community and our employees. We know that these changes have caused an inconvenience to many, and we are making every effort to accommodate you while still keeping in mind the safety of everyone.
- » Our Dispatchers are asking more questions to collect a wider range of information from callers to better prepare our deputies who are responding to calls. This is being done in order for deputies to take more proactive steps; it will not affect our response to calls for service.
- » Deputies may ask community members to meet them outside of homes and businesses where appropriate in order to practice social distancing.
- » Deputies and Detention Officers have been issued personal protective equipment, and they may be seen wearing gloves, face masks, protective eyewear, and clothing. This is especially true in an environment known to have increased risk of illness. Deputies may ask community members to wear surgical face masks if they are showing signs of illness.
- » The FCSO will attempt to utilize alternatives to arrest when possible, and screen arrestees and employees who may be entering the secured area of our detention center facilities. This is to reduce the risk of introducing and/or spreading the virus in the detention center environment.
- » Our community outreach and scheduled community events have been suspended for the next thirty days.
- » We have temporarily suspended ride-along programs.
- » We are regularly sanitizing our facilities and our vehicles in an attempt to keep our employees and citizens safe.

On behalf of the men and women of the FCSO, I want to reassure you that public safety is our number one priority; it always has been, and it always will be. The FCSO continues to work with our local, state, and federal partners to provide the best possible service and response to our community.

We will continue to be a 24-hour, full-service law enforcement agency, and we will always be here to serve you. Our quality of service and professionalism will continue at the highest level, and only the manner in which we conduct business will change temporarily as we utilize social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19. We are committed to protecting the health and well-being of the public and our deputies and to taking every possible step to ensure we are not unknowingly spreading the virus to vulnerable populations by the very nature of our job.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Tim Ryals