



SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Susan E. Manheimer
Chief of Police

200 Franklin Pkwy
San Mateo, CA 94403
(650) 522-7710
www.sanmateopolice.org

MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

For Immediate Release No. 20190520-031

Monday, May 20, 2019

Man arrested for impersonating officer and brandishing replica firearm

The San Mateo Police Department quickly located and arrested a suspect after he brandished a replica firearm and impersonated an officer at two separate shopping centers.

San Mateo, CA – On Sunday afternoon, San Mateo Police Department officers were dispatched to the Hillsdale Shopping Center on multiple reports of an armed subject with a firearm in his waistband and behaving strangely. Officers quickly arrived on scene and conducted a thorough search of the shopping center. Working with Hillsdale Shopping Center Security, images of the subject were obtained and immediately shared with the officers and public. Based on public tips, officers learned the subject likely left the area prior to police arrival. Officers continued to search the area and work with the public to identify the suspect. Hours later, the suspect was spotted conducting similar behavior at the nearby Laurelwood Shopping Center. He was quickly contacted and arrested.

On Sunday, May 19, 2019, at 3:06 P.M., callers initially reported a man with a gun in his waistband at Hillsdale Shopping Center. San Mateo Police flooded the area with officers and later learned the suspect had brandished what looked like a black handgun at several people while telling them he was an undercover police officer. SMPD worked closely with Hillsdale Shopping Center security, local businesses, and the media to obtain and broadcast the suspect's image to the community asking for their help to identify him. Within minutes, tips began pouring in to police dispatch and investigative leads identified Allen Grabovetsky as a suspect. Knowing he was a threat to public safety, the San Mateo Police Department continued a massive search effort to locate Grabovetsky.

At 5:58 P.M., SMPD received information of a similarly described suspect at the Laurelwood Shopping Center. Officers immediately responded and were told by witnesses the suspect had been there an hour earlier and brandished what looked like a black handgun while telling them he was a member of the military. While on scene, officers were alerted by witnesses that the suspect had returned to a nearby business. Officers quickly located the suspect and safely took him into custody. Witnesses from Hillsdale Shopping Center and Laurelwood Shopping Center were able to confirm Grabovetsky was the same suspect from both incidents. A search of Grabovetsky's nearby home revealed indicia to the crimes, including a black colored replica handgun and clothing.

Allen Grabovetsky, a 27-year-old male resident of San Mateo, was transported to San Mateo County Jail and charged with impersonating a public officer (146A(B) Penal Code) and

brandishing a replica firearm (417.4 Penal Code). [According to open source information](#), Grabovetsky was charged in 2010 with multiple counts of impersonating a police officer and other crimes.

The San Mateo Police Department understands the importance of sharing timely, accurate, and reliable information with our community. Thanks to our partnership, the community helped with this suspect's identification and ultimate arrest. Please follow us on all of our alert platforms to stay informed on developing situations in your neighborhood – [Nixle](#), [Twitter](#), [Nextdoor](#), and [Facebook](#).

Remember, if “You see something, say something.” Report suspicious behavior immediately to the San Mateo Police Department by calling 9-1-1 for emergencies or (650) 522-7700 for non-emergencies. In addition, we're encouraging our community to utilize security cameras. They are especially helpful in identifying suspicious activity in neighborhoods when cameras are street facing. Our officers regularly canvass for surveillance and you can help us by notifying SMPD cameras are in your neighborhood at www.cityofsanmateo.org/Nest.

ARRESTED

Allen Grabovetsky, 27-year-old San Mateo resident

Charges: Impersonating a public officer (146A(B) Penal Code) and brandishing a replica firearm (417.4 Penal Code)

MEDIA CONTACT

Officer Michael Haobsh

Public Information Officer

Desk: (650) 522-7626

Email: PDPIO@cityofsanmateo.org

###