



## SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Ed Barberini  
Chief of Police

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### **MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT**

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**Sunday, April 12, 2020**

#### **San Mateo Police Deliver Easter Joy**

San Mateo, CA – Easter weekend was met with a little more sunshine thanks to police department non-profits like the San Mateo Police Officers' Association (SMPOA) and the San Mateo Police Activities League (SMPAL). Together, they splashed cheerful color around San Mateo with gift bags bursting with happiness for both children and adults alike.

Teams of police officers, community services officers, and SMPAL staff took to the streets with their arms filled with bags full of goodies to help families in need during this public health crisis. While gathering her set of Easter totes inside police headquarters, SMPOA board member, Officer Shanna Hughes, said, "We realize that even if you don't celebrate Easter for religious reasons, we know it's a time for get-togethers, egg hunts, and family dinners. We wanted to bring the festivities of Easter into the homes of our community members while they shelter in place."

With our county entering the fourth week since the shelter in place order took effect, now, more than ever, it is critical for San Mateans to stay home. We understand it's a big ask, however, we've learned this is bigger than us. Sheltering in place is about protecting your family, your neighbors, and your friends. Chief Ed Barberini says, "You may sacrifice one holiday this year, but sheltering in place will afford you many more holidays to come and we want you there to celebrate with your family."

You're not alone during this time. From delivering groceries to Easter surprises, the SMPOA and SMPAL are here to help. A program strictly run by donations, SMPAL and the SMPOA assembled 150 Easter totes filled with educational workbooks, toys, art activities, and, of course, Easter candy. After leaving the home of a smiling SMPAL family, SMPOA board member, Alison Gilmore said, "The strength of San Mateo is shining through when it counts the most. Many of the families on our list today are out of work and this is the time we need to step up to help each other out. We're honored to be part of this by giving back to our amazing community through generous donations made to us."

This program was made possible thanks to SMPAL matching donations contributed by the SMPOA, support from the SMPAL board of directors, and additional funding provided by individual officers. With Giving Tuesday quickly approaching on May 5th, we'd like to remind everyone SMPAL is still accepting donations to fill pantry boxes for needy families. Please visit SMPAL's webpage to donate.

To learn more about SMPAL and the SMPOA or to fuel more programs like these with generous donations, please visit their websites at [sanmateopal.org](http://sanmateopal.org) and [sanmateopoa.org](http://sanmateopoa.org). SMPAL's Executive Director, Officer Tracey Unga reminds us, "Together, we are one strong community and our resolve will carry us through to the other side of this COVID-19 pandemic. We will get through this together."

Stay home, stay safe, stay positive!

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