



BLOOMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



Jamal A. Simington - Chief of Police
Paul D. Williams - Assistant Chief
Chad E. Wamsley - Assistant Chief
Aaron A. Veerman - Assistant Chief

305 S. East Street
Bloomington, IL, 61701
309-820-8888

For Immediate Release: March 11, 2024

*The Bloomington Police Department Officers are
KultureCity® Certified Sensory Inclusive™ First Responders*

Bloomington, IL - The Bloomington Police Department has partnered with KultureCity to make our services sensory inclusive. This new initiative will promote an accommodating and positive experience for all with a sensory issue, no matter their age or ability.

The certification process ensures that the staff of the BPD are trained by leading medical professionals on how to recognize those with sensory needs and how to handle a sensory overload situation. KultureCity Sensory Bags, equipped with noise-canceling headphones (provided by Puro Sound Labs), fidget tools and verbal cue cards will be available to anyone who is in need. All marked squad cars are equipped with these sensory bags. A KultureCity Certified Sensory Room is available at the Bloomington Police Department.

Chief Jamal Simington stated, *"The Bloomington Police Department is happy to partner with KultureCity to improve our opportunity to better serve those who have autism. The training has improved our staff's awareness, and we look forward to using the sensory bags which were provided to lessen the stress and better engage with children and adults in our community."*

Sensory sensitivities or challenges with sensory regulation are often experienced by individuals with autism, dementia, PTSD and other similar conditions. One of the major barriers for these individuals is sensitivity to over stimulation and noise, which could potentially be part of the environment when interacting with the BPD. With its new certification, the BPD is now better prepared to assist those with sensory sensitivities in having the most comfortable and accommodating experience possible.

Media Contact:

Officer Bryce Janssen

Bloomington (IL) Police Department

Desk: 309-434-2355 | **Fax:** 309-829-0662 | **Email:** Police@cityblm.org

Prior to their interaction, families and individuals can download the free KultureCity App where one can view what sensory features are available and how they can access them, including how to get a sensory bag and to view a social story of what the interaction could look like.

"Our communities shape our lives and to know that the Bloomington Police Department is willing to go the extra mile to ensure that everyone, no matter their ability, feels included in community experiences is amazing. We're honored to partner with BPD to provide a truly inclusive interaction!" said Uma Srivastava, Executive Director, KultureCity.

KultureCity is a leading non-profit recognized nationwide for using its resources to revolutionize and effect change in the community for those with sensory needs, not just those with autism. Since the program's inception, KultureCity has created over 1,000 Sensory Inclusive public and private services, organizations, events and venues in 6 countries: this includes special events such as the NFL Pro-Bowl, NFL Super Bowl, MLB World Series, and MLB All Star Weekend.



###

If you wish to submit a crime tip and remain anonymous, please contact the Crime & Intelligence Analysis Unit (CIAU) at 309-434-2963 or email CIAU@cityblm.org. You can also text the number 847411 by texting the word "BPDTIPS", then a space, followed by your tip information.

The tip line is not monitored 24/7. The CIAU office is staffed from 8am-4:30pm, weekdays. If no one is available to answer your call, please leave the information on the voicemail or send it by e-mail.

Media Contact:

Officer Bryce Janssen

Bloomington (IL) Police Department

Desk: 309-434-2355 | **Fax:** 309-829-0662 | **Email:** Police@cityblm.org