CITY OF HARRISONBURG
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release: October 9, 2025

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Harrisonburg Police Department Responds to Assault at Purcell Park

Harrisonburg, VA- October 9, 2025- On Wednesday October 8, at 7:15 pm, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center received a call about an assault that had just occurred at Purcell Park.

A woman was walking along the trails in Purcell Park when an unknown male emerged from the brush and attacked her, grabbing her and attempting to sexually assault her. The male is described as a clean-shaven Hispanic male between the age of 20-40, and he was wearing a black t- shirt with dark pants, possibly black or dark blue.

Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) patrol officers immediately responded to the area along with James Madison University Police Department, HPD major crimes detectives, HPD K9 Riggs, and the city's drone operations team. A search of the area was unsuccessful, and the male is believed to have left the area immediately after the assault occurred.

As HPD's Major Crimes Unit continues their investigation, community members are encouraged to take proactive steps to stay safe while enjoying local parks and trails. Walk in well-lit, populated areas, when possible, stay aware of your surroundings, and let a friend or family member know where you will be and your expected return time.

We are asking community members who live in the area to check their cameras for any suspicious activity or individuals matching the male's description. Anyone who was at Purcell Park on the evening of October 8 and may have seen the suspect is also encouraged to report their information to HPD's Major Crimes Unit.

Anyone with information on this case should call Det. Thurston at 540-217-5873 or email Brittany.Thurston@Harrisonburgva.gov. Anonymous tips can also be submitted through Crime Solvers at 540-574-5050, visiting www.harrisonburgva.gov/tip-411, or by texting HPDVA and

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your message to 847411. All tips are anonymous, and information that leads to an arrest may be eligible for a cash reward through Crime Solvers.

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