



April 17, 2019

Statement from John Creuzot, Dallas County Criminal District Attorney

As your District Attorney, I feel it's important to clarify information about the new theft policy that I am implementing. We've heard from citizens and various stakeholders who have questions about the new policy regarding thefts of necessities for amounts up to \$750.

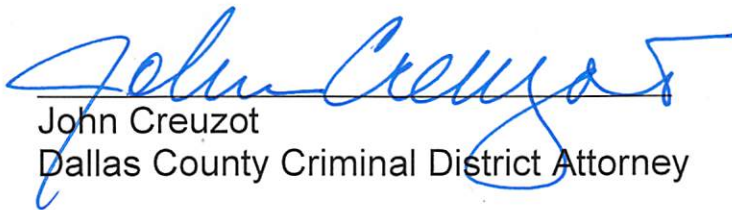
The policy is that this office will not prosecute individuals who commit thefts out of necessity based on hunger and poverty. I previously stated that we will not prosecute theft of personal items less than \$750 unless the evidence shows that the alleged theft was for economic gain. The term personal items has been misinterpreted by some. Personal items are limited to necessity items. Personal items would include items such as necessary food, diapers, and baby formula. Some have also inquired about the \$750 amount. The range for a Class B misdemeanor theft offense is valued at \$100 or more but less than \$750. The \$750 amount was added to cover all Class B misdemeanor offenses.

As stated last week, individuals who shoplift for **economic gain** will be prosecuted. It is understood that individuals who shoplift items valued near or amounting to \$750 are most likely shoplifting for economic gain, such as boosting items for resale, and not out of necessity. Local police departments are still going to operate according to their policies. They will show up and take law enforcement action, either with a citation issued to an individual or with the arrest of an individual. ***I have not directed a police department to stop making arrests for theft offenses. In fact, I have not directed a police department to stop making arrests for any offense where there is probable cause.***

The research shows that individuals who commit thefts for necessity items do so out of hunger and poverty. This policy was created to help address poverty-related problems, and combat the misuse of resources and taxpayer money.

As an example of this, I've cited the woman who was charged with **\$105 theft** who was jailed for nearly two months at a cost to taxpayers of **\$3,300**. We should not burden taxpayers in this way.

Lastly, I would like the community to know we will track this policy along with the other new reform policies. If we see evidence that we need to make adjustments, we will look at the data and make a determination based on the data.



John Creuzot
Dallas County Criminal District Attorney