



## Former police officer arrested in park for throwing ball with daughter due to coronavirus social distancing rules

**The police department has apologized for the arrest, calling it an "overreach."**

By Jeffrey Cook, Clayton Sandell and Jennifer Leong  
April 8, 2020, 6:30 AM ET



Police arrest father at park over alleged coronavirus social distancing concerns Matt Mooney was tossing a softball in a mostly empty park with his 6-year-old daughter when police handcuffed him. He was later released and police apologized.

Courtesy Kirby Wallin

In an incident caught on video, a former Colorado State Patrol trooper said he was handcuffed in front of his 6-year old daughter on a near-empty softball field Sunday by Brighton police officers enforcing [social distancing rules](#). The department apologized Tuesday afternoon, calling the incident an "overreach by our police officers."

Matt Mooney, 33, told ABC News he walked with his wife and daughter from their home to a nearby park Sunday to play softball.

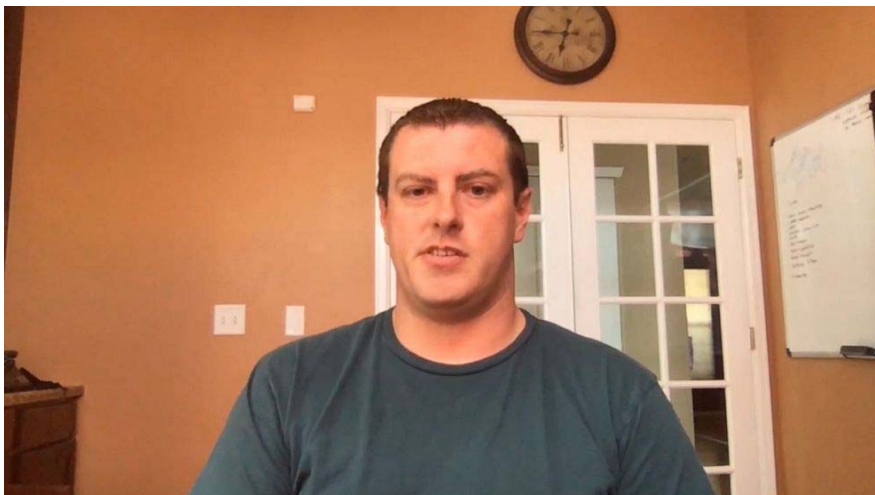
"We're just having a good time, not near anybody else. The next closest person is at least 15 feet away from me and my daughter at this point," Mooney told ABC News.

Police arrived soon after, Mooney said, telling him and others in the area to leave because the park was closed.

Mooney said he told officers that he was familiar with the posted rules and believed he and his family were in compliance and practicing proper social distancing. He said he refused to provide his identification when officers asked for it because he had not broken any law.

"Well, they didn't like that idea. They then proceeded to make a threat against me saying, 'If you don't give us your identification, if you don't identify yourself, we're going to put you in handcuffs in front of your 6-year-old daughter.'"

Matt Mooney, 33, says he was handcuffed in front of his 6-year-old daughter for allegedly not respecting social distancing rules at a Brighton, Colo., park. Police later apologized for the incident.



Mooney said officers handcuffed him and placed him in a patrol car for about 10 to 15 minutes while they phoned a supervisor for guidance. The incident was captured on cellphone footage by former Brighton City Councilman Kirby Wallin.

"Yeah, it's Sunday and the Brighton police are apparently arresting a dad for throwing a ball to his daughter," Wallin is heard saying on the video.

In a statement, the Brighton Police Department said it was "deeply sorry" for the incident and is conducting an internal investigation.

<https://abcnews.go.com/amp/US/police-officer-arrested-park-throwing-ball-daughter-due/story?id=70032966&id=70032966>