

Police call on residents to report beggars

Several people say they have met women either dressed in the national dress or niqab.

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Sharjah: Police are continuing their campaign against begging and have urged residents to contact the nearest police station and report such illegal activities.

"Sharjah Police has a zero tolerance level when it comes to begging. As in the other emirates, begging is an illegal activity and those that do so will be arrested," said a Sharjah Police official, who declined to be named. "If residents are approached by beggars, they should file a report to the nearest police station. Once the complaint is filed, the Criminal Investigation Department will then investigate the matter and arrest the beggars," said the police official.

The statement was made after several residents contacted *Gulf News* about a number of incidents where they were met with female beggars either dressed in the national dress or niqab.

"I tend to visit a hospital in Maysaloon on a regular basis and I have never seen any beggars in the lift until last week. The first time, I was approached by two women who claimed to be Emiratis from Abu Dhabi, and they said that they visited Sharjah for one day and that they were short of money, and did not have Dh170 to pay for their blood test," said Mohammad Ameen, a Sharjah resident.

"I initially believed their plea because they were dressed very smartly and wore perfume, but I did not have enough money with me that day to help them. After one week, I visited the same hospital and they approached me with the same excuse, forgetting that they spoke to me before," Ameen explained.

"These women are covered in veils and abayas and ask for help, showing their crippled daughter's or son's pictures, which makes any heart melt and give money instantly," said Asna Jabeen, another resident.