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DC Crime Emergency Will Likely Stretch Into 2004

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Washington (AP) - D.C. officials say a "crime emergency" will probably stay in place through the first of the year.

The emergency status is set to expire December first. No final decision has been made to extend it. But Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Margret Kellums says her inclination is to keep it in place until the city can keep its crime rate down. She credits the program with a "dramatic" drop in crime in the district in the past 90 days.

The emergency status allows Metropolitan Police Chief Charles Ramsey to change work schedules without 14 days' notice.

D.C.'s crime fight is also getting a boost from the Guardian Angels, who've begun patrolling streets in Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant and Adams Morgan. Mayor Anthony says he welcomes all volunteer efforts to help make the city safer.