



LAWRENCE TWP. POLICE

ANNUAL REPORT



2022

Command Staff



Chief Christopher Longo



Captain Joseph Lech IV



Lt. Michael Whitmore



Lt. James Smith



Lt. Richard Laird



Lt. Shaun Sexton
(Replaced Lt. Joseph Caloiaro
who retired)

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Introduction

The Lawrence Township Police Department is committed to providing exceptional police service to all members and visitors of the Lawrence Township community. The department strives to provide appropriate services, referrals and active enforcement of New Jersey state laws, as well as all Township ordinances. Our goal is to serve our community in a manner that helps improve the quality of life for all.

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to impact our society through two thousand-two. The men and women of the Lawrence Township Police Department have adapted to the new challenges that we face on a daily basis. We are committed to working hand in hand with our residents, community partners and governing body to provide a culture where everyone is treated with the utmost safety, dignity and respect.

In 2022 the Lawrence Township Police Department continued on a strong path of embracing all members of our community, working effectively to complete our mission with the support of our citizens. This is only possible with all members of our department acting as the true professionals that they are.

The command staff of the department collaborates to review our policies and procedures to ensure that the best possible services are provided to the community we serve. Each year, it is the goal of the department to improve all facets of police operations. There are many areas of importance, including reviewing calls for service, analyzing past critical incidents and keeping abreast of developing criminal trends both locally and nationally that help our department remain on the cutting edge in the field of law enforcement.

The report contained on the following pages represents a summary of the department's activities during the calendar year of 2022. The entire staff of the Lawrence Township Police Department wants the public to know that we promote a professional, dedicated and knowledgeable approach to help solve the problems that face our town. This summary of operations is only a small portion of each officer's commitment to the overall service to the community.

Additionally, the department acknowledges the continued appreciation and support of the Mayor, Township Council, Township Manager, and community in our efforts to provide the best possible services to all persons. A police agency cannot maximize its efforts without the support of the community and governing body. In Lawrence Township, our job is made much easier by having such support.

If anyone has any questions regarding the material presented in this report, please feel free to contact Chief Christopher Longo with your inquiries.

Our Mission



Our Mission

The mission of the Lawrence Township Police Department is to improve the community by practicing problem solving strategies against crime and quality of life issues. We are committed to conducting pro-active policing strategies to reduce crime and the fear of crime in our town. We believe in, and are committed to, developing partnerships within the community to improve the quality of life within Lawrence Township.

Our Vision

The vision of the Lawrence Township Police Department is to work in partnership with the citizens and businesses of our community to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the State of New Jersey and the ordinances of Lawrence Township. We will be pro-active in addressing quality of life issues by utilizing innovative problem-solving techniques. We will solicit input from our residents and businesses alike to address all concerns that may arise. We are committed to providing the utmost professionalism and integrity in the services that we provide.

Our Values

Honor-Integrity-Knowledge

Honor: We will honor our police powers. We understand that our police powers are derived from the community in which we serve.

Integrity: We are committed to the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct, which are the cornerstones of our profession. We are dedicated to upholding the highest moral and ethical standards.

Knowledge: We will continually strive to maintain a high level of professional development through continuous learning and specialized in-service training.

Council Overview

As with several years prior, 2022 continued to present challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the presence of the pandemic continued to improve, the disease was still present and lingered throughout the year. With the on-going challenges of COVID-19 persisting, the men and women of the Lawrence Township Police Department remained on course and continued its professional model of policing.

In an effort to improve the manner in which we interact with those we police, the officers conducted non-enforcement activities in our community. These activities were:

- The Annual Egg Hunt was held at Central Park in April. The event was a great success with many township families participating. In 2021, this event was cancelled and replaced with a “Bunny Drive-Thru” that occurred at the Municipal Complex, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Coffee with a Cop was held at Café du Pain at the Lawrence Shopping Center in November. This was a collaborative event run with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) - Annual Food Drive. Members of the police department interacted with many residents who attended. The Food Drive was a success, producing hundreds of pounds of food that was donated to HomeFront.
- Members of the police department participated in the 2022 Holiday Tree Lighting event. As part of the event, the police department partnered with Recreation to raise donated toys for “Joey’s Little Angel’s” nonprofit. Toys were donated as a means to “post bail” for the Grinch who was “arrested” for stealing the happiness of the holidays. The event was a great success, and the toy donation to Joey’s Little Angels set a new record!

The police department had 60 full time sworn officers, and 4 SLEO III School Officers in 2022. Also in 2022, Sergeant Laird was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, Officer McClister, Officer Corado, and Detective Dunn were all promoted to the rank of Sergeant. We also had 4 retirements during this calendar year.

Council Overview

During 2022, the Lawrence Township Police Department initiated or responded to 28,426 calls for service. This is a 6.5% decrease in the number of calls for service compared to 2020 when 30,433 calls for service were answered.

Every law enforcement agency in the State of New Jersey is required to submit monthly crime statistics to the New Jersey State Police Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. The crimes reported to the New Jersey State Police UCR are: Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Burglary, Assault, Larceny/Theft, Motor Vehicle Thefts and Arson. During 2022, there was a 18% decrease in reported UCR crimes in Lawrence Township. There were 521 reported UCR crimes in 2022 compared to 639 reported crimes in 2021. This decrease was directly related to 132 less larceny/theft incidents in 2022 compared to 2021. In 2021, there was a 30% increase in UCR crimes when compared to 2000.

The complete statistics on crime in Lawrence Township for the year 2022 can be reviewed in the Uniform Crime Report section of this report.

In 2022, the Lawrence Township Police Department continued efforts in deploying officers to locations where traffic incidents most frequently occur. In 2022, there was a decrease in traffic enforcement posts by 17%, from 1,239 posts in 2021 to 1,024 posts in 2022.

The police department believes crime in our town can be reduced by arresting potential criminals wanted on outstanding warrants before they have an opportunity to commit a new crime. During the course of 2022, Lawrence Township Police Officers arrested persons wanted on warrants a total of 259 times, which was an increase of 60% from 162 in 2021.

Council Overview

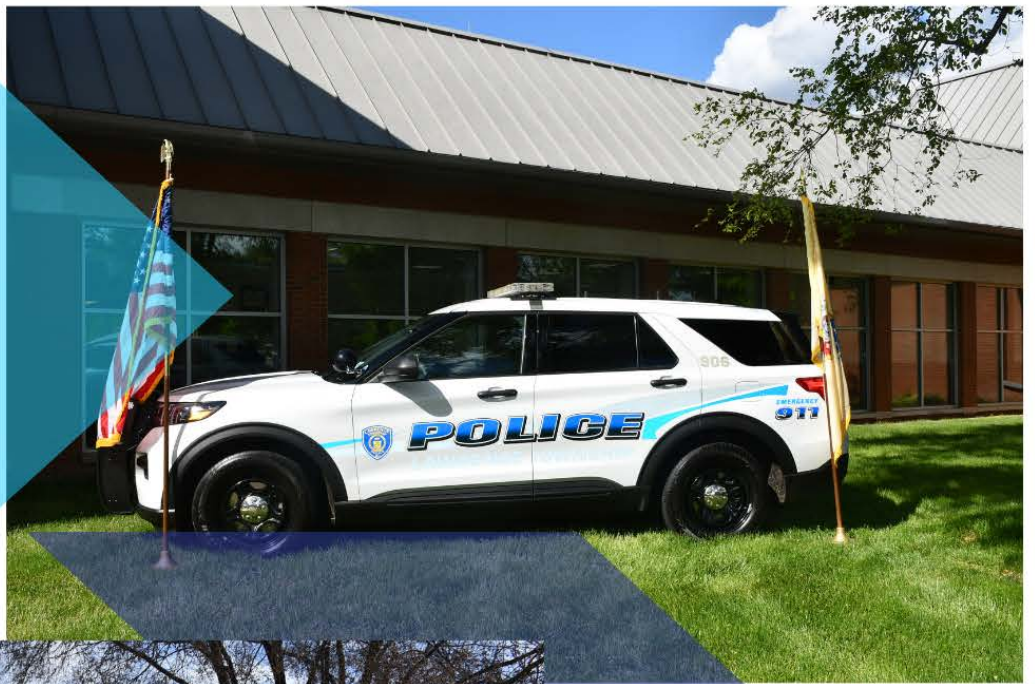
Domestic violence can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion and gender. It occurs in couples who are married, dating or living together. It affects people of all socioeconomic and education levels. In 2022, the Lawrence Township Police Department investigated 234 cases of domestic violence, which is a 1.7% decrease from the 238 domestic violence cases investigated in 2021. In an effort to assist victims of domestic violence the police department has partnered with Womanspace, who oversees the department's Domestic Violence Victim Response Team (DVVRT). The DVVRT provided informal counselling and referrals to 33 victims of domestic violence in 2022.

The police department continues to work with our community organizations taking an active approach to solving problems that affect us all. During the 2021 calendar year, we began a partnership with the Volunteers of America (VOA) to provide assistance to residents in need of help. This assistance could include such things as drug/alcohol counseling, homelessness, mental health issues or financial assistance. Additionally, we have becoming an ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement) certified police agency through Georgetown University. This certification ensures a commitment by the police department to actively de-escalate and intervene with fellow officers in situations before force needs to be used.

With the support of several community partnerships, the officers of the Lawrence Township Police Department are committed to reducing not only crime, but the fear of crime through active enforcement of our laws, as well as ensuring any quality of life issue that comes to the department's attention is handled promptly and professionally.

Throughout 2022, the police department worked tirelessly to ensure quality service to our citizens regardless of the nature of the problem, time of day, weather conditions or other factors uniquely present in each citizen's need for police service.

Moving into 2023, the police department will continue to provide excellent police service to our community. Our dedicated police officers will continue to work to reduce crime/fear of crime, building stronger community ties, and improve in all areas of operation and service.



Crime

Stats/Trends

On the following pages is a breakdown of crime statistics and calls for service for Lawrence Township, with a 2 year comparison (2021 and 2022).

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME STATISTICS

CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENSES (UCR)	Year 2021	Year 2022	% Change
HOMICIDE	0	0	0.00%
RAPE	6	19	216.67%
ROBBERY	7	16	128.57%
ASSAULT	57	45	-21.05%
BURGLARY	54	59	9.26%
LARCENY-THEFT	482	350	-27.39%
MV THEFTS	33	29	-12.12%
ARSON	0	3	300.00%
Total:	639	521	-18.47%

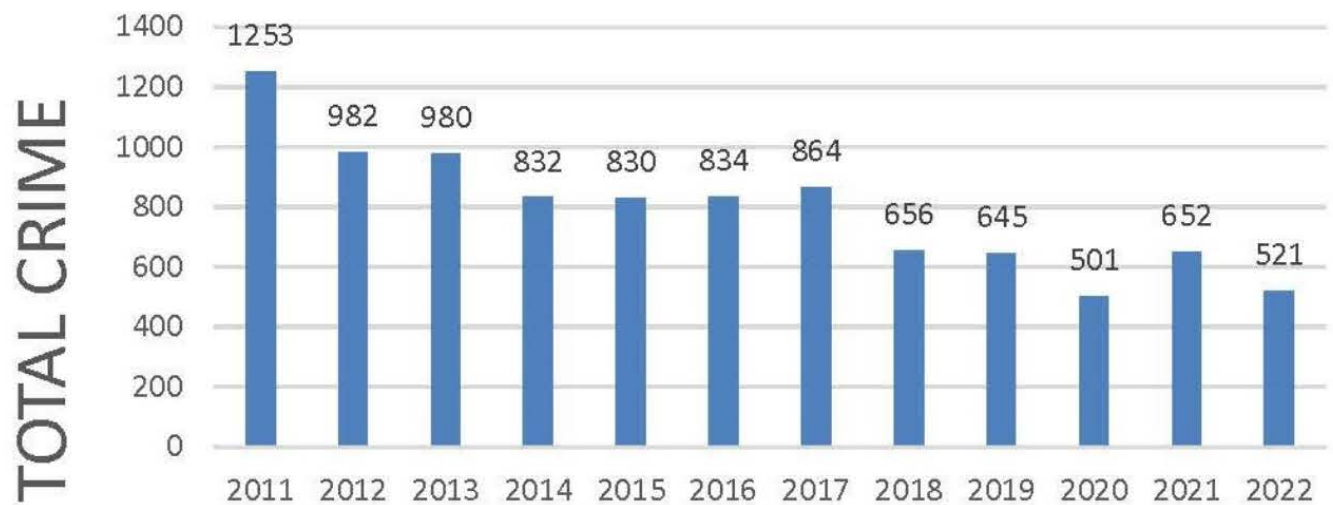
CALLS FOR SERVICE

Accidental Injury	8	1	-88%
Alarms	1584	1611	2%
All Other Offenses	81	74	-9%
Civil Matter	128	182	42%
Criminal Mischief	60	66	10%
Disorderly Conduct	5	9	80%
Disturbances- Domestic	56	53	-5%
Disturbances	171	141	-18%
Domestic Violence	238	234	-2%
DWI	29	29	0%
DV Response Team Assignment	25	33	32%
Escorts- Prisoner	142	197	39%
Escorts- Other	33	44	33%
Fixed Posts	2709	1585	-41%
Forgery and Counterfeiting	16	23	44%
Fraud	96	165	72%
Harassments	193	175	-9%
Hazards (Total)	743	591	-20%
Health (Total)	235	221	-6%
Identity Theft	39	33	-15%
Investigations	125	71	-43%
Liquor Laws	0	0	0%
Mischievous Children	19	33	74%
Missing Persons	38	54	42%
Narcotic Drug Laws	77	51	-34%
Noise Abated (Total)	263	248	-6%
Property Damage (Total)	59	70	19%
Receiving Stolen Property	9	9	0%
Recovered Property	128	113	-12%
School Posts	770	740	-4%
Sex Offenses	29	10	-66%
Shoplifting	191	243	27%
Suspicious Persons	474	378	-20%
Traffic Enforcement	1239	1024	-17%
Traffic Stops-Commercial Vehicles	50	29	-42%
Traffic Stops	2122	1622	-24%
Trespassing	75	82	9%
Violation of Twp. Ordinance	101	59	-42%
Warrant Arrest	172	259	51%
Weapons Offenses	17	16	-6%
Welfare Check	266	255	-4%
Total for above categories:	12988	10833	-17%

Crime

Stats/Trends

Total crime trends for Lawrence Township *since* 2011



Personnel

As of December 31, 2022, the Lawrence Township Police Department employed sixty (60) Sworn Police Officers, two (2) of which were in the Training Academy, along with one (1) armed court attendant who is an hourly employee, four (4) Special Law Enforcement Officers assigned to schools, one (1) Administrative Clerk, two (2) Account Clerks, one of which is a part time employee, (1) one Confidential Secretary and one (1) Records Support Technician that manages the Police Property and Evidence function. The Police Department is contracted with Motivated Security who provides crossing guard services for the Township.

The Township's decision to contract with the iXP Corporation for the police department's dispatching services has proven to be beneficial for maintaining daily police officer staffing levels within the police department. The privatization of the communications center has allowed police officers, who were previously used in the communications center to fill in for communications operators, to return to patrol duties and other necessary police functions.

The Police Department has seen a reduction in staff over the course of the past several years as reflected on the chart on the next page. Positions once held by sworn officers have either been eliminated or are now held by civilian or part time personnel.

The staffing of the department cannot be reduced to any lower a level without having a negative effect on the police response time to calls for service. Neighboring municipalities have steadily increased their Public Safety personnel levels to address the needs of their communities. A full-time Traffic Unit, Safe Neighborhood Unit, and a fully staffed Training Bureau are areas in which the Lawrence Township Police Department could benefit its officers and the community.

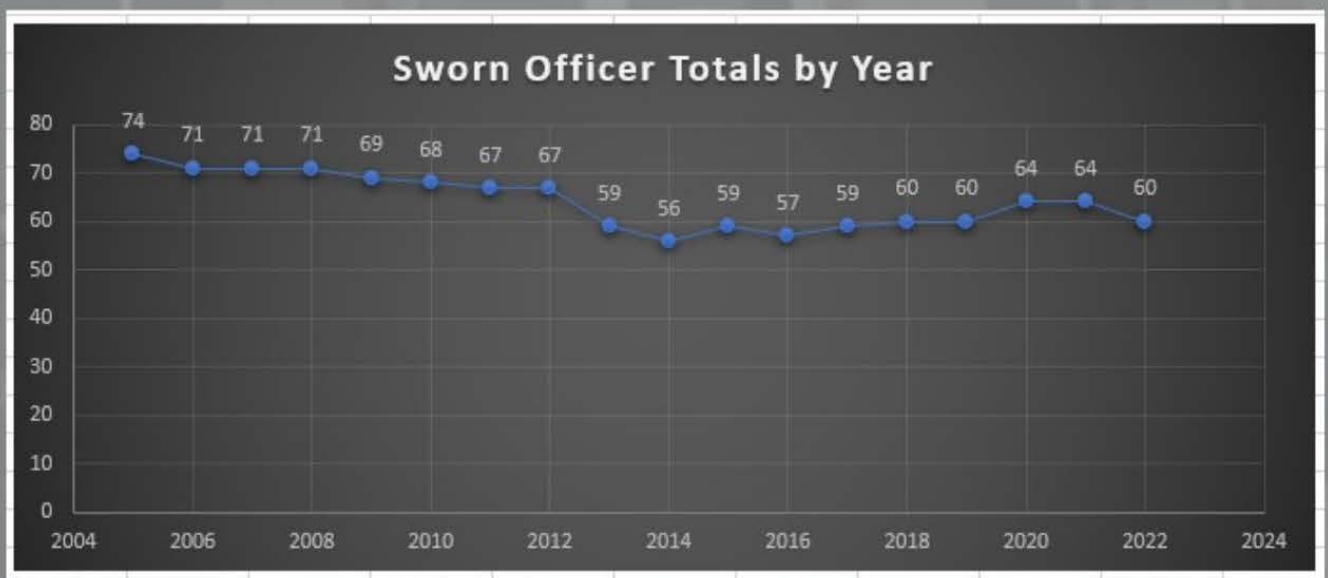
The Department had three retirements in 2022, including Chief of Police Brian Caloiaro.

As of December 31, 2022, there were five (5) sworn officers who have submitted letters of intention to retire during the calendar year 2023. These retirements are scheduled to take place in February, April, May, June and September. In addition to those five (5) officers, there are two (2) additional officers who are eligible for retirement, that have not stated their intention to do so. It should be noted that the four officer retirements scheduled, include, two (2) Police Lieutenants, a Police Detective, the Department Information Technology Officer and an experienced Traffic Officer.

Personnel

Due to continuous retirements over the past several years, approximately 38% of the sworn officers have less than five (5) years of experience. While the police department continues to mentor the younger officers as they gain experience, continued training is an essential part of each officer's individual success, as well as for the success of the police department and community.

Looking ahead, the Police Department continues to anticipate a high rate of officers to retire. The five year projection is that 20 officers will be retire, or be eligible to retire, in the next 5 years. It takes approximately one year to hire and train new officers. This means that if an officer retires, their replacement will not be ready to work in the capacity of a solo police officer for one year. It is crucial that the Township allow the Department to increase its staffing level well before these retirements occur so we will be able to properly address the needs of our community.





Patrol Division

In 2022, the Patrol Division was initially commanded by Lieutenant James Smith (1st Platoon) and Lieutenant Michael Whitmore (2nd Platoon). In September, Lieutenant Joseph Caloiaro was transferred to take command of the 2nd Platoon. In October, Sergeant Richard Laird was promoted to Lieutenant and took command of the 1st Platoon. The Patrol Division commanders are part of the department's command staff and report to the Captain and Chief of Police.

The year started out with thirty-five officers assigned to the Patrol Division along with six patrol sergeants. By the end of the year, the division had thirty-two patrol officers. Based on our schedule, workload, and minimum manpower requirements, the optimal staffing level would be forty officers assigned to the Patrol Division.

The Patrol Division continued to work a compressed work week schedule, also known as the "Pitman" schedule. On this schedule, officers work a total of seven 12-hour days over a fourteen-day period. The division is comprised of two platoons, with each platoon having one "day squad" and one "evening squad". Each squad has anywhere from six to nine officers depending on the current staffing.

Each platoon is currently staffed by three sergeants. One sergeant is assigned to the "day squad" and the other sergeant is assigned to the "evening squad". The third "relief" sergeant is used to cover vacation between the two squads. Based on our schedule, workload, and staffing, the optimal number of supervisors would be four sergeants per platoon.

The Patrol Division lieutenants worked a variation of the twelve-hour patrol schedule with a modified rotation of work days and regular days off. This modified schedule allows for weekly command staff meetings to occur.

The Patrol Division continued to assign the majority of the daytime officers to a specific zone for an entire year. This is done so officers will become familiar with a particular area of the Township, as well as problems specific to certain neighborhoods. The assignment of an officer to the same zone for a year holds officers more accountable to that area and provides officers with a sense of ownership of their respective zone.

Patrol Division

Each platoon has officers specifically trained as Alcotest operators, evidence technicians, field training officers, and patrol rifle operators. We also have officers who have their FAA remote pilot license who can fly the department's small unmanned aircraft systems, better known as drones. A motorcycle unit was also developed in 2022 and patrol officers were deployed on motor patrol.

The Patrol Division handled the vast majority of the 28,429 calls for service received or initiated by the department in 2022. This is a decrease of 2,004 calls for service compared to 2021. This change represents a decrease of approximately 6.5% as compared to 2021.

The department made 520 less traffic stops in 2022 than in 2021, an approximate 24% decrease. Motor vehicle crashes increased from 1155 to 1415, an approximate 22.5% increase. (Non-suspicious) citizen contacts and business contacts decreased by 17%.

Patrol Division officers also respond to investigations relating to violations of township ordinances and the land use ordinance. There were 59 investigations of ordinance violations in 2022, which included illegal dumping, snow removal violations, noise violations, false alarm activations and unregistered vehicles on private property. This constitutes a decrease of 41% from 2021. The decrease in police response may be correlated to ordinance violations being handled by Township code enforcement employees, rather than the police department.

To investigate many of these situations, patrol officers often had to interact with other township departments in the interest of providing the best possible service to the residents and merchants of Lawrence Township. The Lawrence Township Health Department, Recreation Department, Code Enforcement, Public Works, Engineering and Planning Department, Tax Office, and Municipal Court have all provided support, cooperation and assistance in the efforts of our department. Federal, state and county agencies have also been utilized by the Police Department to provide service to residents.

The department is tasked with providing school crossing guards. This task was recently outsourced to a third party entity. The township has 16 school crossing posts located throughout the township that need to be staffed during the school year. Due to staffing issues with the private vendor, Patrol officers were needed to cover these school posts on a frequent basis.

Patrol Division

Compared to last year of school, the amount of school crossing posts covered by the patrol officers decreased from 770 to 740 (a 4% decrease). This is still above the net zero school posts expected to be handled by patrol officers, as the third party entity was expected to prevent patrol officers from being assigned to school posts. School posts put a substantial strain on the day to day patrol operations as some posts last for two hours. The addition of a third party entity to maintain school post coverage only produced marginal reduction in patrol manpower usage.

During 2022, the department investigated 51 incidents involving various types of illegal drugs. These drugs ranged from illegally obtained prescription pills, heroin, and cocaine. This represents a decrease of 34% from 2021. This decrease from 2021 was mainly driven by legislation that decriminalized the possession of marijuana.

A majority of the incidents involving illegal drugs were self-initiated by officers by the use of motor vehicle stops and stops of suspicious persons. The majority of the investigations ended in the arrest of suspects and the issuing of criminal complaints against them.

The Patrol Division investigated 30 incidents of driving under the influence of alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance. This is one more DUI/DWI arrest than 2021. Every time an intoxicated driver is removed from the street, there exists a strong possibility that motor vehicle crashes were prevented and innocent lives were saved.

Each platoon within the Patrol Division had an assigned traffic officer or traffic enforcement officer in 2022. The ultimate goal of this is to increase traffic safety by reducing the number of motor vehicle crashes through enforcement of traffic law violations. Another effect of this is the reduction of crime. Studies have shown that proactive traffic enforcement causes downward trends in criminal activities in specific target areas.

The Lawrence Township Municipal Court sessions are held via the virtual court hearing system. During in-person court sessions, the two civilian Armed Court Attendants handled municipal court security. The armed court attendants are responsible for security inside the court room and assist civilian attendants with exterior security issues when necessary.

Patrol Division

The armed court attendants continued to help the court staff, the municipal prosecutor, and police officers in the preparation of cases for court. The creation of the armed court attendant positions continues to be a great asset to the Patrol Division. It enables supervisors to reassign officers who were previously responsible for handling court room security, to street patrol and other assignments that better serve the public. Lieutenant James Smith was the designated court liaison and worked with the court staff to schedule officers for their court appearances. It is planned that with the recent retirement of one of the armed court attendants, that a third party entity will take responsibility for court security purposes in 2023.

Domestic Violence and Domestic Disturbances increased by approximately 15% in 2022, compared to 2021. The Domestic Violence Victim Response Team (DVVRT) had the ability to meet with domestic violence victims and those impacted by domestic violence, in-person again, post-pandemic. In some instances, virtual or telephonic meetings took place. Lawrence Township Police Department's DVVRT is part of the consolidated Mercer County regional teams. The team is coordinated, trained, and administered by staff at Womanspace. The Central Regional Team includes members from Lawrence and Princeton Townships. The team members meet on a regular basis to discuss team issues and receive in-service training. In 2022, the Central Region DVVRT responded to 14 calls for their services in Lawrence Township, an 11% decrease from 2021. This decrease does not take into account virtual or telephonic victim assistance, which was frequently provided.

Along with an increase in domestic violence calls, mental health calls increased by 6%, as well as, suicide and suicide attempts increased by 25%.

Lawrence Township police officers took part in numerous hours of mandatory training in firearms, domestic violence, pursuits, resiliency and de-escalation. All officers were also recertified in CPR in 2022.

The Department hosted the annual National Night Out gathering and a Trunk-or-Treat. These events were a great success and probably had the highest turnout since the inception. Additional community outreach events, such as Coffee with a Cop and a holiday food drive were also conducted.

Patrol Division

Below are some examples of the excellent police work done by members of the Patrol Division in 2022:

On January 4, 2022, at approximately 3 A.M. a resident of Harding Ave. called 9-1-1 to report that someone had broken into the residence while the occupants were asleep. The residents awoke to see a burglar standing in the room. The burglar stole the victim's car keys from inside and stole the victim's car as he fled the area. Officers responded immediately but the suspect had already left the area. The following day, around 1 A.M. Patrolman Cahill, who had responded to the burglary, spotted the victim's vehicle, which had been stolen, being operated on Darrah Ln. Ptl. Cahill attempted to stop the stolen vehicle, however the operator fled and subsequently crashed. The operator was able to flee on foot from the scene of the crash. Further investigation from evidence located in the recovered stolen vehicle lead to the charging and arrest of a male for multiple counts of burglary, theft and other offenses.

On March 21, 2022, Officers responded to the area of Lawrenceville-Pennington Rd. on a report that person was pointing a handgun out the window of a vehicle after a verbal altercation with another person. Officers checked the area and were able to locate a vehicle matching the description. Subsequent investigation found that a party within the vehicle possessed an imitation firearm, altered to appear realistic in nature. Multiple persons were charged with weapons offenses and making threats.

On March 24, 2022, during the overnight hours, Patrolman Wells was performing a check of the motels. He came across a vehicle that was believed to have been stolen from outside the county. Ptl. Wells was able to recover the stolen vehicle and return it's possession to the victim.

On April 23, 2022, shortly after noon, a resident of Cresthill Rd. called 9-1-1 to report someone had broken in the residence and fled upon being spotted by the resident. A throughout canvass of the neighborhood for witnesses was conducted and a suspect vehicle was quickly identified. Working with other law enforcement agencies outside the county, officers and detectives were able develop suspects. This lead to the successful arrest and charging of multiple persons, not only for this burglary but also assisted in solving other similar style burglaries that had happened in NJ.

Patrol Division

On July 26th, 2022 officers were dispatched to Eggerts Crossing Village on a report from a parent that a three old non-verbal Autistic child had walked away from the residence. All available patrol units and detectives responded to the area and began a systematic search for the child. Surrounding law enforcement agencies were also notified to assist with the search. Lawrence Police K-9 Handler Det. Steimle #227 and his K-9, Brix, also responded to assist with the search. While searching, a juvenile witness was able to provide information of the possibility the missing child entered into a wood line. Det. Steimle deployed K-9 Brix and they both entered the wooded area. K-9 Brix picked up the scent of the child and the child was successfully located near a creek bed. The child was found to be un-harmed and was reunited with his parents.

On August 24, 2022, Officers responded to the area of Rt. 1 and the D&R Canal on a report that a person fishing was being shot at from a nearby residence. Upon arrival, officers heard active gunfire and located a fisherman that stated someone had been shooting towards him as he fished the canal. During the course of the investigation, a safety perimeter was established and a tactical response team, commonly referred to as SWAT, was requested. After an extended on-scene investigation, the area was determined to be safe and there was no other immediate threat to the community. Additional investigation lead to the charging and arrest of multiple persons involved, as well as the recovery of multiple firearms from involved persons. Multiple agencies assisted in this event highlighting the importance of interagency cooperation within the county.

On September 17, 2022 at 3:00am, Patrolman Kraszewski and Patrolman Bystrek were patrolling the neighborhoods during overnight hours and observed two suspicious males in the Society Hill South neighborhood. An investigation was undertaken and both males were determined to have just burglarized vehicles in the area. One of the males was also found to be illegally carrying a handgun with a high capacity magazine. Proactive enforcement like this, even in the early morning hours, not only solved unreported car burglaries before victims were even aware of the crime, but more importantly was able to remove a handgun from being illegally carried on the streets.

Patrol Division

On October 10, 2022 Patrolman Stever was on patrol and was flagged down by a concerned resident that a partially clothed male was acting erratically while walking on Myrtle Ave. On foot, Ptl. Stever approached a distraught male. As he was talking with him, he saw that the male was holding a large knife in his hand. Ptl. Stever quickly disarmed the male of the knife and took him into protective custody. It was later determined that the male was possibly suffering from a mental health emergency. The quick actions of Ptl. Stever prevented the male from harming himself or others and allowed the male to seek treatment for his mental health emergency.

On November 27, 2022 patrol units responded to an armed robbery of the Dunkin Donuts on Princeton Ave. During a very thorough initial investigation, Patrolman Hardin was able to quickly identify a suspect vehicle. That vehicle was located in a neighboring town and a possible suspect was then identified due to this evidence. The male suspect was eventually arrested and charged. A handgun was later recovered. This case displays professional investigations by all levels of involved officers, leading to the successful arrest of an armed robber and an illegal firearm being taken off the streets.

On December 1 2022, multiple reports of two loose and aggressive dogs were received from residents near Princeton Ave. The dogs had attacked both humans and domesticated animals. Over the course of a week, Lawrence Police coordinated with Lawrence Twp. Animal Control, with the assistance of Trenton Humane Police and other volunteer animal rescue groups to track and contain the animals. This task proved difficult given the dog's demeanor (scared and aggressive) as well as the heavy brush and wood line which the dogs would retreat into when confronted. Humane traps, trail cams, drones and foot searches were used in an attempt to capture the animals. Eventually the animals' owners, residing in a neighboring town, were identified and escorted to the area. Once in the presence of the owner, the dogs were able to be collared and leashed. The dogs were safely reunited with the owners, without further injury to the animals or persons. This incident displayed officer's commitment to community safety, as the dogs unfortunately posed a threat to residents and their pets. Officers across all shifts, with the assistance of witnesses and callers, were able to ensure the dogs were safely reunited with the owners and without any further harm.

Quakerbridge Mall

QUAKER BRIDGE MALL SUBSTATION

In February 1993, the Township of Lawrence and management team of the Quaker Bridge Mall signed an agreement to provide a permanent police presence at the Quaker Bridge Mall. Mall management agreed to reimburse the Township for the cost of a full time police sergeant at the mall. This agreement has remained in effect since its inception.

The Quaker Bridge Mall has over 90 stores and is considered one of the largest malls in New Jersey with over one million square feet of retail space. The Quaker Bridge Mall is considered a premier shopping destination and has the ability to draw a significant crowd of patrons on a daily basis, adding to its on-site population.

In 2022, the Quaker Bridge Mall continued its contractual agreement with the police department and funded a position dedicated solely to the Quaker Bridge Mall. In the past, this position used to be a sergeant. In 2013, the police department began permanently assigning police officers to the mall. In previous years there were two police officers assigned to the Investigation Division, QBM bureau, and they were assigned to rotate weekly providing the mall with at least 40 hours of coverage each week.

In January of 2022, due to manpower constraints Lawrence Township Police Officer Derek Paul was assigned to the Quaker Bridge Mall Bureau as an Officer in Charge. While acting as the officer in charge of the substation, Officer Paul was responsible for handling calls for service, investigating criminal activity, and preparing criminal complaints. Officer Paul also responded to motor vehicle accidents, medical calls, disturbances and handled other requests. Officer Paul handled a majority of investigations that occurred at the mall and followed them through to prosecution. The incidents that occurred at the mall while the officers were not on duty were assigned to Officer Paul for follow up.

Quakerbridge Mall

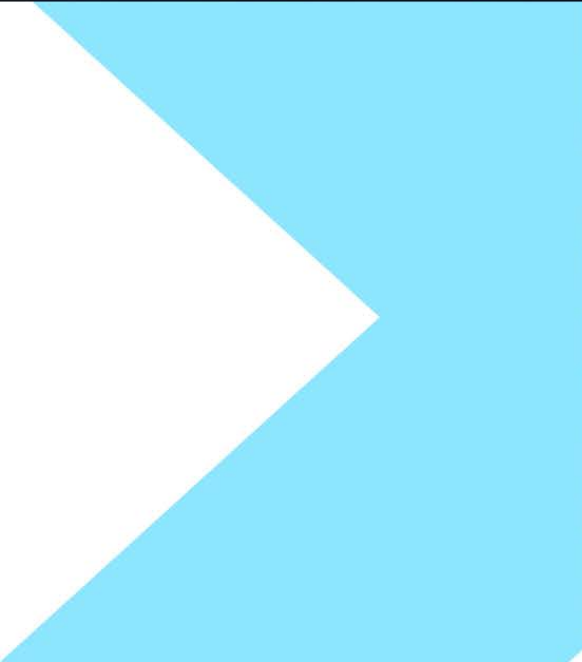
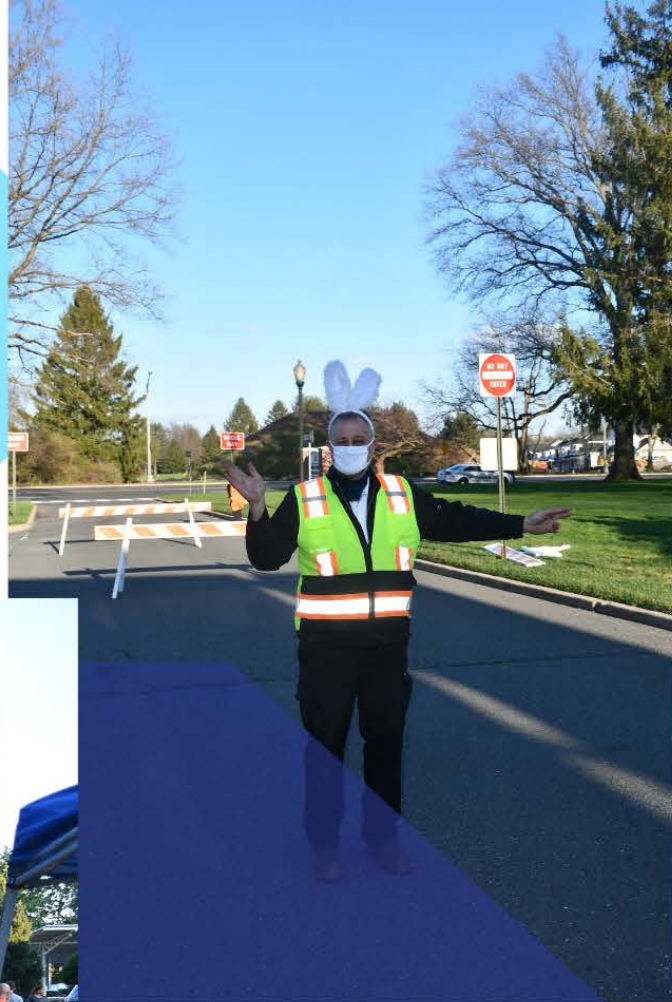
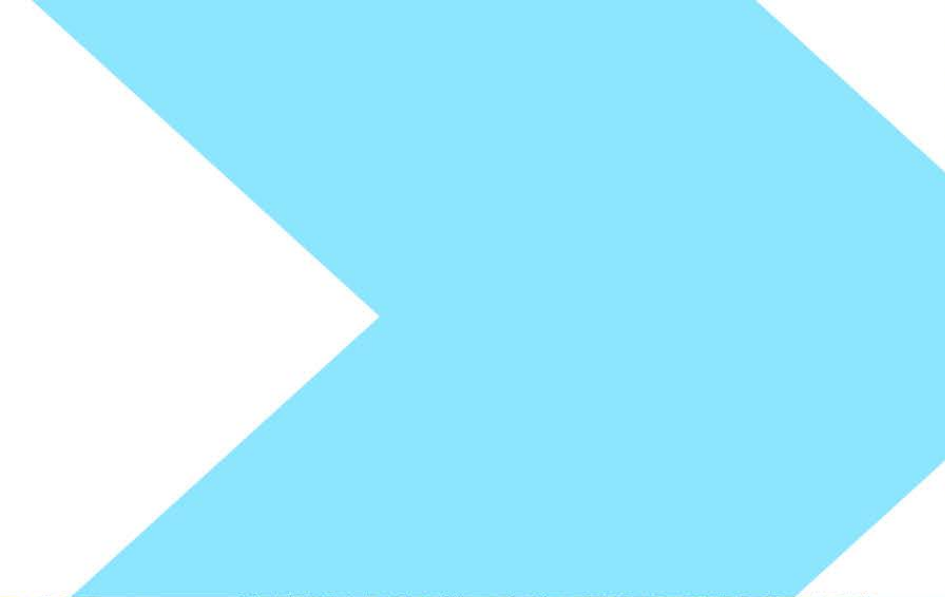
Officer Paul as well as other officers assisted mall security in enforcing code of conduct violations, as well as trespassing violations on mall property. These combined efforts have resulted in a significant increase in safety for patrons and employees.

The Quaker Bridge Mall Bureau officer works closely with mall management and their security representatives. Meetings are regularly held with mall management and security. The meetings allow us to review past practices, brainstorm new ideas and implement new security measures to make the mall a safer place. In addition, Officer Paul also has a working relationship with the loss prevention officers employed by the mall's two major department stores.

In 2022, there were a total of 864 calls for service at the Quaker Bridge Mall, as compared to 862 calls for service in 2021. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the operation of the mall, the police department has continued to maintain a presence at the mall, conducting fixed posts in and around the mall due to domestic preparedness initiatives and terrorism prevention, as well as crime prevention.

A total of 253 criminal offenses were reported at Quaker bridge Mall in 2022. This is a 30% increase in reported crime at the mall, when compared to 195 criminal offenses reported in 2021, and 212% increase in reported crime at the mall, when compared to 81 criminal offenses in 2020. In addition, 100 adults and 34 juveniles were arrested at the mall for various criminal offenses in 2022. There was one reported auto theft at the mall during 2022.

Although the retail environment is continuing to change, the police department looks forward to continuing our customer service oriented policing style of law enforcement at the Quaker Bridge Mall in 2023 and for many years to come.



Investigations

INVESTIGATION DIVISION

In 2022, the Investigation Division was comprised of the Detective Bureau, Juvenile Bureau, Property and Evidence Bureau, the Quaker Bridge Mall Bureau and School Resource Officer / Special Law Enforcement Officer (SLEO III) Programs. A Lieutenant was the commander of the division. A Detective Sergeant was the supervisor of the division.

In 2022, the Detective Bureau was comprised of one part-time account clerk, four general assignment detectives and an Intelligence Officer. The Juvenile Bureau was comprised of one juvenile detective. The Property and Evidence Bureau was comprised of one property/evidence detective and one civilian employee. The Quaker Bridge Mall Bureau was comprised of two police officers. There was one School Resource Officer and four Special Law Enforcement Officers.

ADMINISTRATION

The commander of the Investigation Division in 2022 was Lieutenant Christopher Longo until he was promoted to Provisional Chief in September 2022. In addition to supervision of all Investigation Division employees, the commander of the Investigation Division served as the Drug Task Force Coordinator, Megan's Law Coordinator, Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Officer, Public Information Officer and Supervisor of the Evidence/Property Management Bureau. The Division Commander was also responsible for the annual investigation of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) licenses, new ABC applications, annual inspections of towing contractors, and new towing license applicants. Throughout the year, inspections are performed on establishments that serve alcoholic beverages to ensure compliance with the law and Township ordinance. Towing inspections are conducted on approved towing agencies throughout the year to ensure proper compliance.

Detective Sergeant Kevin Reading was assigned to the Investigation Division and is the direct supervisor of the detectives and other Investigation Division personnel. Detective Sergeant Reading also assisted Lieutenant Longo with the daily operations of the Investigative Division along with many other assigned tasks.

The part-time Account Clerk transcriber assigned to the Detective Bureau prepared 141 criminal cases that were presented to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office in 2022, as compared to 149 criminal cases that were presented to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office in 2021.

Investigations

A total of 695 vehicles were towed by Lawrence Township Police Officers due to motor vehicle crashes, disabled vehicles, and traffic and criminal offenses in 2022 as compared to 658 vehicles in 2021. Of these 695 vehicles, 45 were not claimed by their owners and had to be investigated against liens, re-titled and then exposed for sale at auction. These duties and other clerical tasks were performed in the past by detectives.

GENERAL ASSIGNMENT DETECTIVES

The general assignment detectives in 2022 were Todd Caruso, Ryan Dunn, James Steimle and Sean Kerins. In November 2022, Detective Dunn was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Officer Paulina Way replaced the open position.

General Assignment Detectives handle a variety of criminal offenses and serve in an on-call capacity every fifth week. During the detective's on-call week, they are required to be available after-hours to respond and investigate serious crimes that require the expertise of a detective. Each detective has specialized training in areas such as arson, sex crimes, computerized voice stress analysis, counter-terrorism, homicide investigation, fraud, financial crimes, interviewing, human trafficking and hostage negotiations. Throughout 2022, the general assignment detectives handled 266 cases; this is a 21% increase over the 219 cases they handled in 2021.

The clearance rate of cases for the general assignment detectives in 2022 was 56%. Cases are considered cleared when they have been solved. To be considered cleared, the cases can be categorized as Cleared, which is when the suspect has been identified and complaints have been signed; Exceptionally Cleared, which is when the suspect has been identified but for some reason no complaint has been signed by an officer (such as the offender committed suicide, victim declines prosecution, etc.); Unfounded, which is when it is discovered that no crime occurred; and Closed, which is when a case that is not a crime is solved (such as a missing person is located). The 44% of the cases that were not cleared remain Open and currently under investigation, or they are classified as Inactive. A case remains Inactive until further information, leads, witnesses and/or evidence is located.

Investigations

The following incidents are examples of some investigations conducted by the General Assignment Detectives in 2022:

- On May 17, 2022 at 10:08 am, Lawrence Township police officers responded to the old 7-Eleven located at 415 Lawrence Road on the report of a burglary in progress. A suspect was ultimately taken into custody and charged with multiple offenses related to a copper theft. A search warrant was granted and during a search of the suspect's vehicle, Lawrence Township Police K9, Brix, located 17 oz. of crystal methamphetamine inside of a bag in the trunk. The suspect did not wish to cooperate with the investigation and was charged accordingly.
- During June 2022, the Investigations Division identified a pattern of checks being stolen from the Mail and used in fraud incidents in the New York/New Jersey region. Detectives identified specifically targeted US Postal Mailboxes (in Lawrence Township), which were being targeted for burglaries over holiday weekends. The Investigations Division then initiated a joint investigation including the US Postal Inspections Service. After a BMW believed to be involved with the burglaries fled from patrol officers, the Investigations Division utilized several intelligence sharing systems and obtained multiple search warrants for cellphone and vehicle GPS data to identify the owner of that BMW's involvement in an organized ring committing mail theft fraud and money laundering. On September 5, 2022, Detectives and Postal Inspectors were conducting surveillance of the Craven Lane Post Office and were able to apprehend Richard Rowe (Owner of the BMW) and an accomplice as they were burglarizing the mailbox at that office. Rowe was charged with multiple counts of: Burglary; Theft; Fraud; Forgery; and Receiving Stolen Property. The prosecution was assumed by the US Department of Justice.
- On August 24, 2022, Lawrence Township Police Officers responded to the area of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Tow Path, where a male reported that he had been shot at in the area of the Rt. 1 Tow Path Foot Bridge. Patrol Officers identified the crime location, identified two involved participants, and recovered multiple shell casings on scene. Detectives responded to the area and learned that a third involved individual had possibly retreated inside of one of two homes on the property of 3072 Brunswick Pike. Over the following several hours, members of the Investigations Division conducted multiple interviews (victim, suspects, and witnesses) and obtained "No-Knock" Search Warrants for the homes and more than 15 Shed structures on the property.

Investigations

- (Continued from previous page) The Investigations Division then coordinated with the Mercer County Sheriff's Office Tactical Response Team to execute those search warrants. The search warrants led to the recovery of (2) firearms used in the assault, a large cache of assorted firearms, and the subsequent arrest and charging of 3 individuals for weapons and aggravated assault offenses.
- On November 1, 2022 at 07:59 a.m., Lawrence Township Police Officers were dispatched to the Lawrenceville Garden Apartments for a suspicious vehicle. Upon arrival, officers identified the vehicle in question and observed multiple bullet holes in the front windshield. Three occupants of the vehicle were identified and released from the scene. The vehicle in question was impounded and searched by the Mercer County Shooting Response Team. Inside of the vehicle, Detectives discovered a 9mm handgun which matched the same caliber bullet from a shooting in the City of Trenton the night prior. All three occupants were charged in Lawrence with Unlawful Possession of a Weapon and ultimately arrested.
- On November 7, 2022 at 09:30 a.m., Lawrence Township Police Officers were dispatched to Rider University on the report of a peeping tom. The suspect was identified by investigating officers and Detective Steimle was able to take the suspect into custody 15 hours later. The male was interviewed by Detective Steimle and Detective Dunn and he confessed to following the two female students into their dormitory. The male was charged with multiple offenses related to the incident.
- On November 9, 2022, at 9:50 p.m., Lawrence Township Police responded to a report of a man beaten and robbed by 6 men inside of the Brunswick Circle Extension QuickChek. The Investigations Division identified that the incident stemmed from Trenton Street Gang conflicts. Detectives used video surveillance and other technical resources to identify two of the suspects. The Investigations Division executed a search warrant at the Trenton home of one of the suspects which led to the seizure of a handgun. Detectives coordinated with various law enforcement partners to locate and apprehend the suspects.

Investigations

- On November 27, 2022 at 06:05 a.m., Lawrence Township Police Officers responded to Dunkin Donuts located at 1625 Princeton Avenue on the report of an armed robbery in progress. Investigating officers did not locate the male suspect as he fled the scene prior to their arrival. Detective Steimle was able to identify and locate the getaway vehicle used by the suspect and searched it, pursuant to a search warrant. Inside, Detective Steimle discovered multiple items belonging to a male party who resided in Ewing Township and who also matched the description of the suspect. Detective Steimle worked with members of the Mercer County Tactical Response Team, Trenton Police Department, and Ewing Police Department, executing a search warrant at the male's residence. Located inside of a closet was a handgun which was ultimately identified as the firearm used in a shooting incident in Ewing Township. Further evidence was discovered which linked the male to multiple armed robberies in Mercer County and he was charged accordingly. After taking the male into custody Detective Steimle and Detective Dunn were able to obtain a full confession for his involvement in the Dunkin Donuts armed robbery.

TASK FORCE PARTICIPATION

Violent Crime continues to be a major concern in our society. These types of crimes and the criminals that commit them do not recognize jurisdictional borders. The Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, who is the head law enforcement agency in Mercer County, has spearheaded several task forces to address violent crime concerns within the County. The Lawrence Township Police Department firmly believes that participating in the regional task forces is beneficial in combatting crime in an effort to keep our town and its citizens safe.

While no Lawrence Township Police Officers / Detectives were assigned long term to a Mercer County Task Force in 2022, officers did assist with various Task Force investigations that involved persons of interest within Lawrence Township. Detective Steimle continues to assist the Mercer County Prosecutors Office Computer Crimes Unit and a regular basis with forensic extractions of cell phones.

Investigations

During 2022, Lawrence Township Officers / Detectives assisted the following Task Forces and agencies, Mercer County Internet Crimes Against Children Unit (ICAC), Mercer County Special Investigations / Narcotics Unit (SIU), Mercer County Homicide Task Force (HTF), Mercer County Shooting Response Team (SRT), United States Marshal's Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), New Jersey State Police, United States Secret Service, New Jersey Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness, and the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice.

Lawrence Township Police Department has been dedicated in assisting regional task forces. Participation and assistance to the task force units is beneficial to building working relationships with outside agencies and is an important factor in combatting crime within our community.

INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Detective Sean Kerins is the Lawrence Township Police Department Intelligence Officer and is assigned to the Investigation Division. Detective Kerins investigates complex criminal activity such as narcotics distribution, prostitution, human trafficking and homeland security related cases. Prostitution is often linked to Human Trafficking and organized crime groups in New Jersey and surrounding states. Detective Kerins gathers intelligence through his vast network of sources, and investigates criminal activity throughout Lawrence Township. He has built partnerships with Federal, State, County and local law enforcement agencies. Due to the complexity of the criminal activity that Detective Kerins investigates, many of these cases involve multiple jurisdictions. As such, Detective Kerins works closely with the Mercer County Narcotics Task Force, Mercer County Prosecutors Office, Department of Homeland Security, Division of Criminal Justice, New Jersey State Police, and many other agencies during his investigations. The positive working relationships between Lawrence Township, the Mercer County Prosecutors office and many other agencies continue to provide a multidisciplined effort to combat criminal activity in Lawrence Township.

Due to the shortage of manpower in the Detective Bureau, Detective Kerins has also assumed the role of a general assignment detective, in addition to his responsibilities as the Intelligence Officer. As a general assignment detective, Detective Kerins handles cases assigned to him by the Investigation Division supervisors.

Investigations

PROPERTY & EVIDENCE OFFICER

During 2022, the property custodian was Records Support Technician Christopher Quaste. The property custodian is responsible for the maintenance and legal disposal of all property and evidence received by the department.

Civilian Technician Quaste's exceptional ability to multi task has assisted the Investigative Division with functioning in an efficient manner throughout 2022. The Property room and Evidence aspect of the division should be a handled as a two-person position, however Technician Quaste has managed to successfully handle the task. Technician Quaste is an essential part of the Investigative Division and Records Division. As additional tasks are requested of himhe continues to complete them and fulfill both positions at a high-level.

Using the B.E.A.S.T (Bar-coded Evidence, Analysis, Statistics and Tracking) computer system, the Department collected 3,805 pieces of property and evidence during 2022, which is an increase of 216 pieces collected in 2021.

Of the total amount of evidence taken in 2022, 241 pieces involved narcotics or narcotics paraphernalia a decrease of 162 items from 2021.

A total of 1088 pieces of evidence/property were destroyed or returned to owners during 2022, an increase of 171 pieces from 2021's statistics.

A total of 135 pieces of evidence were submitted to the New Jersey State Police laboratory for analysis in 2022, a decrease of 156 pieces from 2021's statistics.

Utilizing this property management system ensures that evidence integrity and control is maintained, which is essential for court proceedings and successful prosecution. It allows for orderly tracking of evidence when it is needed for court, if it is being returned to the owner, being destroyed, or sold at auction.

Investigations

There continued to be increased requests for digital media from the Mercer County Prosecutors Office, specifically the need for Body Worn Camera Footage. In 2022, 1,007 submittals of digital media were made to the Mercer County Prosecutors Office, an increase of 150 submittals from 2021. The presence of Digital media continues to increase its importance during court and prosecution processes. The time that is spent uploading required digital media files, in addition to Technician Quaste's other responsibilities continues to illustrate his ability to manage time and multitask.

JUVENILE BUREAU

Detective Suzanne Girard is the department's only Juvenile Detective for the year of 2022, which is a decrease from two juvenile detectives in 2021.

Juvenile Bureau Detectives are assigned all criminal and noncriminal investigations involving juveniles that occur within Lawrence Township. The Juvenile Bureau investigated 89 cases in 2022, which is an 27% decrease from the 122 cases handled in 2021. The clearance rate of cases handled by the Juvenile Officer was 55% in 2022.

The Juvenile Detective remains active in being visible and building relationships with both students and staff in the public and private schools located within Lawrence Township. Our presence, in the schools has established a positive working relationship with the administrators and faculty members to ensure a safe learning environment for the children of Lawrence Township.

The Juvenile Detective took an active role with the children who attended the Lawrence Township Safety Town Program. The Safety Town program was offered by the recreation department during the last week of June and first week of July. The program was held outdoors in Village Park.

Detective Girard is also assigned as the Megan's Law officer. In this assignment, all sex offenders required to register by law must report to Detective Girard, who also coordinates notification and exchange of information with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office.

Investigations

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER AND SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Police Officer Steven Austin was assigned to Lawrence High School S.R.O. position. Officer Austin has continued to build relationships with the young adults who attend Lawrence High School and bridge the gap between law enforcement, the students and staff. Officer Austin quickly established a connection with the students by promoting a sense of mutual trust and respect. Officer Austin has been a remarkable role model for the students.

Special Law Enforcement Officer Class III (SLEO III) is a newer category of security within New Jersey school systems as of 2018. They are armed, retired law enforcement officers who previously served as fully trained, full-time officers in New Jersey. They are hired with the purpose of maintaining a visible police presence in schools and helping to keep students and staff safe from outside threats.

Lawrence Township Council, Lawrence Township Police Department and the Lawrence Board of Education worked as partners to fund our SLEO III officer program. During 2021, there were SLEO III officers assigned to Lawrence Middle School, Lawrence Intermediate School, Notre Dame High School and our Elementary schools.

During the 2022 school year the Lawrence Township Police Department had four Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEO), Frederick Doldy, Michael Cseremsak, George Henderson and Christopher Jackson. SLEO Doldy was assigned to Lawrence Middle School, and is a retired Lawrence Township Police Department Sergeant. SLEO Michael Cseremsak was assigned to the Lawrence Intermediate School, and is a retired Hopewell Township Police Department Sergeant. George Henderson was assigned to the elementary schools, and is a retired Mercer County Sheriffs Officer. Christopher Jackson was assigned to Notre Dame High School, and is a retired East Windsor Police Department Lieutenant. These officers work closely with school administrators and faculty to ensure a safe learning environment.

The ability to have a SLEO officer in every school has afforded the department to develop personal relationships with staff and students. The presence of the SLEO officers in each school also provides the opportunity for instant communication and coordination between law enforcement and school staff in the event of an emergency situation.

Investigations

COMMUNITY NARCOTIC INITIATIVES

- **PROJECT MEDICINE DROP**

During 2022, the Lawrence Township Police Department continued to participate in “Project Medicine Drop”. Project Medicine Drop is a program offered in conjunction with the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs that allows citizens to dispose of unused, expired or unwanted medications 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Lawrence Township Police Department has conveniently installed a drop box in the lobby of the Police and Courts Building. Citizens are urged to dispose of their unwanted medication in the drop box to prevent them from falling into the hands of those who might make them available for abuse, and to prevent them from being flushed into the water supply or thrown into the trash where they could contaminate the environment. In 2022 the Lawrence Township Police Department collected 702 pounds of medications in our drop box which is an 8% increase from 2021.

The program has existed since January of 2014, and in that time 6,514 pounds of medications have been collected and properly destroyed. The program is ongoing and citizens are urged to clean out their medicine cabinets and dispose of their unwanted medications in our drop box.

- **NALOXONE (NARCAN)**

There has been an increase in Opioid deaths in New Jersey due to the high potency of Heroin and Fentanyl. Lawrence Township Police Department continues to work diligently on the drug abuse that affects members of our community. This includes working with local, county, state and federal agencies to eradicate drugs in our communities.

The Mercer County Prosecutors Office, in conjunction with Capital Health Systems supplied the drug Naloxone, more specifically the brand name Narcan, to be carried in all Lawrence Township Police vehicles. Narcan reverses the effect of an opioid overdose and saves lives.

In 2022, Lawrence Township Police Officers administered Narcan 13 times to patients suffering from drug overdose, compared to 22 times Narcan was administered in 2021. In 2022, the Lawrence Police Department responded to 17 incidents of drug overdose, which is a decrease of 37% from 27 incidents in 2021. During 2022, there were 2 suspected fatal drug overdoses in Lawrence Township.

Investigations

- **OVERDOSE PROTECTION ACT**

Narcotics addiction touches families in many communities. Narcotics addiction has no boundaries and can affect every culture. Lawmakers enacted the Overdose Protection Act to help individuals with narcotic addictions to get medical treatment when an overdose occurs. The Overdose Protection Act protects the patient and those that take an active role in obtaining help for the patient, from being charged criminally. Anyone that suspects a friend or family member is experiencing an overdose should call 9-1-1 immediately without fear of arrest.

- **COMMUNITY ADDICTION RECOVERY EFFORT**

In October 2017, the Lawrence Township Police Department initiated Lawrence Community Addiction Recovery Effort (C.A.R.E.) with Recovery Advocates of America. This partnership with Recovery Advocates of America will assist individuals that come in contact with the members of the Police Department to get help with their addiction disorders. Lawrence C.A.R.E. offers a pathway to recovery by providing resources, access to treatment and guidance from a trained counselor to assist the person with addiction disorder to get the help they need.

Due to COVID-19, the CARE program was unfortunately suspended during the 2021 calendar year.



Firearms

The Department has completed its 2022 Firearms Qualifications. Please find listed below the qualification courses that were conducted.

SPRING / SUMMER 2022 FIREARMS QUALIFICATION: May 31st through June 30th:

Fifty-five (55) Lawrence Township Police Officers and one (1) armed municipal court attendant successfully completed the below listed firearms qualification in accordance with the NJ Attorney General's Directive on Law Enforcement Firearms Training, Mercer County Prosecutor's Office Uniform Firearms Policy and Lawrence Township Police Department General Orders.

COURSES OF FIRE:

1. Handgun Qualification Course #1
2. Handgun Qualification Course #2
3. Handgun Night Qualification Course
4. SS Qualification Course
5. SS Night Qualification Course

WEAPONS:

1. Make: Glock semi-automatic .40 cal. Pistol, Model: 22 and 27
2. Make: Remington shotgun, Model: 11-87
3. Make: Sig Sauer, Model: 516, .223 Rifle
4. Off-duty weapons as approved by General Order, Chief of Police, and Supervising Firearm Instructor

AMMUNITION:

1. Service load .40 cal.: Make: Federal 180 grain, HST JHP (Pistol)
2. Equivalent load .40 cal.: Make: Federal American Eagle 180 grain, FMJ (Pistol)
3. Shotgun load 12 gauge 2 ¾": Make: Federal Slug
4. Rifle load .223, Make: Federal 55 grain Hi Shok (Rifle)
5. Equivalent load .223, Make: Federal American Eagle 55 grain (Rifle)
6. Off-duty loads of various calibers and bullet weights as approved by General Order, Chief of Police and Supervising Firearms Instructor

Firearms

FALL 2022 FIREARMS QUALIFICATION: November 1st through December 2nd:

Fifty-one (55) Lawrence Township Police Officers and one (1) armed municipal court attendant successfully completed the below listed firearms qualification in accordance with the NJ Attorney General's Directive on Law Enforcement Firearms Training, Mercer County Prosecutor's Office Uniform Firearms Policy and Lawrence Township Police Department General Orders.

COURSES OF FIRE:

1. Handgun Qualification Course #1
2. Handgun Qualification Course #2
3. Handgun Night Qualification Course
4. SS Qualification Course
5. SS Night Qualification Course

WEAPONS:

1. Make: Glock semi-automatic .40 cal. Pistol, Model: 22 and 27
2. Make: Remington shotgun, Model: 11-87
3. Make: Sig Sauer, Model: 516, .223 Rifle
4. Off-duty weapons as approved by General Order, Chief of Police, and Supervising Firearm Instructor

AMMUNITION:

1. Service load .40 cal.: Make: Federal 180 grain, HST JHP (Pistol)
2. Equivalent load .40 cal.: Make: Federal American Eagle 180 grain, FMJ (Pistol)
3. Shotgun load 12 gauge 2 ¾": Make: Federal Rifled Slug
4. Rifle load .223, Make: Federal 55 grain Hi Shok (Rifle)
5. Equivalent load .223, Make: Federal American Eagle 55 grain (Rifle)
6. Off-duty loads of various calibers and bullet weights as approved by General Order, Chief of Police and Supervising Firearms Instructor

IN SERVICE VEHICULAR PURSUIT AND USE OF FORCE TRAINING:

All officers successfully completed the biannual In-Service Use of Force and Vehicular Pursuit Policy training as directed in the NJ Attorney General's guidelines.

Megan's Law



MEGAN KANKA

A seven-year-old girl from Hamilton, NJ who was raped and murdered by her neighbor in 1994. Her parents fought to have a law passed that would inform communities of sex offenders living among them. "Megan's Law" was passed within months of her murder and was later adopted by numerous other states.

Megan's Law

Offender Registration

Megan's Law provides for a central registry of sex offenders and a community notification procedure that requires county prosecutors to place offenders into one of three categories based on the risk of re-offense by the offender. Those categories are as follows:

Tier 1 is used when determined that the risk of re-offense is low. Notification is to law enforcement personnel only.

Tier 2 is used when determined that the risk of re-offense is moderate. Notification is to law enforcement agencies, community organizations, agencies and groups that have registered with the county prosecutor's office. All local educational institutions, licensed day care centers and summer camps that are likely to encounter the offender are notified.

Tier 3 is used when determined that the risk of re-offense is high. In addition to the notifications in Tier 2, members of the public who are likely to encounter the offender are also notified.

In accordance with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, the Investigation Division of the Lawrence Township Police Department follows the firm guidelines for registration of Megan's Law violators. It is the Investigation Division's obligation to fingerprint, photograph, track, and maintain meticulous files on these offenders. The Investigation Division conducts random inspections on Megan's Law offenders to ensure no violations are being committed. This information is regularly reported to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. The Investigation Division also maintains a master registration book that includes documentation of offenders from other municipalities in addition to offenders in our town.

The Investigation Division of the Lawrence Township Police Department processed registrations for (23) Sex Offenders in 2022. Over the course of the year, the actual number of registrants being tracked fluctuates. This is due to sex offenders moving, committing a criminal offense, being incarcerated or dying. As of December 31, 2022, there are currently (21) sex offenders being tracked by the Lawrence Township Police Department. Of the registrants being tracked at the end of 2022, (12) are Tier #1 and (8) are Tier #2. There is currently (1) absconded sex offender.

Internal Affairs

INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT

The goal of the Lawrence Township Police Department is to provide the most professional police services possible to the citizens of Lawrence Township and the State of New Jersey. Honesty and integrity are paramount to this goal. The mission of the Internal Affairs Unit is to fully and impartially investigate all complaints about police officer conduct. Lieutenant Joseph Lech commanded the Administrative Division until September of 2022, when Lt. Michael Whitmore assumed command of the Administrative Division. The Administrative Division is comprised of the Professional Standards Bureau and the Records Bureau. The Professional Standards Bureau is comprised of the Internal Affairs Unit and the Accreditation unit.

Police procedure mandates that complaints about police officer conduct be accepted 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Complaints are accepted from all persons regardless of race, color, creed, sex or handicap. Complaints are also accepted from juveniles and arrested persons, as well as other law enforcement organizations. In addition, complaints can be received in person, by telephone, mail, email or anonymously. Complaints received about police officer conduct are generally broken down into nine categories. These categories include allegations of committing a crime, excessive use of force, improper arrest, improper entry and improper search. They also include differential treatment and demeanor complaints, as well as serious and minor rule infractions. All complaints are investigated fully using a variety of investigative techniques.

During 2022, the Officer Accountability Bureau received 29 complaints about officer conduct. Those complaints are broken down into the following categories: 5 complaints for demeanor, 16 for other rule violations, 4 for excessive force, and 4 alleging other criminal violations. During 2022, a total of 13 investigations were completed with a disposition. As of the end of 2022, 26 cases are still under investigation (includes cases open from previous years).

2022 Internal Affairs Complaint Dispositions

Type of Complaint	Sustained	Exonerated	Not Sustained	Unfounded	Admin. Closed	Total Dispositions
Excessive Force				1		1
Improper Arrest						
Improper Entry						
Improper Search						
Other Criminal Violation						
Differential Treatment						
Demeanor	1	2				3
Domestic Violence						
Other Rule Infraction	5		2	2		9
TOTAL	6	2	2	3	0	13

Sustained: The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation against the officer by a preponderance of the evidence.

Exonerated: The alleged incident occurred, but the actions of the officer were justified, legal and proper.

Not Sustained: The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation.

Unfounded: The alleged incident did not occur.

Administratively Closed: Examples include situations when a complainant withdraws the complaint or the subject officer terminates employment.

Internal Affairs

In accordance with the New Jersey Attorney General's Guidelines on Internal Affairs, police agencies are required to publicly report when an officer has received a fine or suspension of 5 days or more. During 2022, no Lawrence Township Officer received a final suspension of 5 days or more.

The Officer Accountability Bureau reviews each Use of Force incident that occurs to ensure proper levels of force were utilized by the officers. In 2022 Lawrence Township Police Officers arrested 643 individuals for various crimes and offenses. Of these 643 arrests, officers only had to use force on 29 occasions (4.5%). The 29 use of force incidents includes 78 officer filed use of force reports.

The department is now also required to record when officers point their firearm at a suspect (recorded as a "show of force"). In 2022, there were 10 "show of force" incidents in which 9 different officers pointed their firearm at a potential threat.

Physical force involves contact with a subject beyond that which is generally utilized to affect an arrest. Examples include wrestling a resisting subject to the ground, using wrist locks or arm locks, striking with the hands or feet, or other similar methods of hand-to-hand confrontation. Each of the 29 use of incidents involved some type of physical force.

Five of the incidents required the officers to use mechanical force. Mechanical force involves the use of some device or substance, other than a firearm, to overcome a subject's resistance. Examples include the use of a baton or other object, canine physical contact with a subject, or chemical or natural agent. Four of the mechanical force incidents involved the use of O.C "pepper spray" and one instance of using a baton (non-strike).

None of the incidents required the use of deadly force. Deadly force is force which a law enforcement officer uses with the purpose of causing, or creates a substantial risk of causing, death or serious bodily harm. Significantly, there were no serious injuries sustained by any arrestee during any of the use of force incidents.

2022 Use of Force Report

Total Number of incidents necessitating the Use of Force	29
Total number of persons against whom force was used	29
Total number of incidents involving officer use of Physical Force	29
Total number of incidents involving officer use of Mechanical Force	5
Total number of incidents involving officer use of Deadly Force	0

Internal Affairs

Another function of the Officer Accountability Bureau is to conduct random drug testing of sworn police personnel at least twice in a calendar year. During these drug tests, officer names are randomly selected and an impromptu drug test is conducted.

Due to the changes surrounding the legality of marijuana, the department only conducted one random drug screening in 2022 as we waited further guidance on the marijuana usage by law enforcement. With respect to our one test, all of the officers tested negative for any use of illegal drugs. No officers were tested under the suspicion of using illegal drugs.

In conclusion, the Bureau strives to ensure all complaints brought to the attention of the department will be investigated fully and impartially. The utilization of the WatchGuard in-car video cameras and the WatchGuard body worn cameras has assisted in the investigation of the majority of the complaints.

Starting in January of 2023, our department will be transitioning to the Axon in-car and body camera platform. The Axon “body 3” body worn camera is considered a state of the art camera platform and it will assist the department in the investigation and disposition of our internal investigations.

The internal affairs unit is involved in all aspects of the department, and in turn, the information gained from complaints and investigations is used to train officers, review procedures, and plan for the future.

Accreditation

ACCREDITATION UNIT

The Lawrence Township Police Department is an accredited agency through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. Lt. Michael Whitmore is currently accreditation manager.

Accreditation is an ongoing process whereas the department must continue to show proof of compliance and undergo a rigorous assessment every three years. The NJSACOP accreditation program is built around 112 standards that are spread over five chapters.

Our department received its initial accreditation in 2016, and then was unanimously approved by the commission for our first re-accreditation status in March of 2020. The department just completed its second re-accreditation assessment and on-site visit in December of 2022. We anticipate in obtaining our second re-accreditation at the March 2023 commission hearing.

An accreditation program has long been recognized as a means of maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. Accreditation is the certification by an independent reviewing authority that an entity has met specific requirements and prescribed standards. Schools, universities, and hospitals are some of the most well-known organizations that are required to maintain accreditation.

Law enforcement agencies in New Jersey can attain accredited status through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. Accreditation is a progressive and time proven way of helping law enforcement agencies calculate and improve their overall performances.

Participating agencies conduct a thorough self-analysis to determine how existing operations can be adapted to meet these objectives. When the procedures are in place, a team of trained assessors verify that applicable standards have been successfully implemented. Accreditation status represents a significant professional achievement for a law enforcement agency. Accreditation acknowledges the implementation of policies and procedures that are conceptually sound and operationally effective.

Accreditation

The benefits of accreditation are:

- Accreditation increases the law enforcement agency's ability to prevent and control crime through more effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services to the community it serves.
- Accreditation enhances community understanding of the law enforcement agency and its role in the community, as well as its goals and objectives.
- Citizen confidence in the policies and practices of the agency is increased.
- Accreditation, in conjunction with the philosophy of community policing, commits the agency to a broad range of programs (such as crime prevention) that directly benefit the public.

For the Chief, accreditation increases cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies and other branches of the criminal justice system. The accreditation process requires an in depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations, and administration to include:

- Establishment of agency goals and objectives with provisions for periodic updating.
- Re-evaluation of whether agency resources are being used in accord with agency goals, objectives, and mission.
- Re-evaluation of agency policies and procedures, especially as documented in the agency's written directive system.
- Correction of internal deficiencies and inefficiencies before they become public problems.

Accreditation

The accreditation standards provide norms against which agency performance can be measured and monitored over time. Accreditation provides the agency with a continuous flow of Commission distributed information about exemplary policies, procedures, and projects. Accreditation provides objective measures to justify decisions related to budget requests and personnel policies.

Accreditation serves as a yardstick to measure the effectiveness of the agency's programs and services. The services provided are defined, and uniformity of service is assured. Accreditation streamlines operations, providing more consistency and more effective deployment of agency manpower.

Accreditation requires that agency policies and procedures are in written form and are available to all agency personnel at all times. Accreditation assures employees that every aspect of the agency's personnel system is in accord with professional standards, and that the system is both fair and equitable.

The agency is compelled to operate within specific guidelines. It is accountable to the Commission. The agency must stay in compliance with the standards set forth by the Commission in order to retain its accreditation. The morale of the agency is enhanced by increasing the employees' confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of their own agency. Operations become more streamlined and consistent.

Accreditation policies address officer safety issues and provide for adequate training and equipment of the officers. Accreditation is a coveted award that symbolizes professionalism, excellence and competence. Employees take pride in their agency, knowing that it represents the very best in law enforcement.



Records

During the majority of 2022, the Records Bureau was staffed by one civilian supervisor and one civilian clerk. In October of 2022 an additional civilian clerk was added to assist with variety of records related issues, most notably the increase of expungement orders received from the courts. Lieutenant Joseph Lech IV was the Records Bureau commander until October of 2022 when he was promoted to Captain. Lieutenant Michael Whitmore was assigned as the Records Bureau commander in lieu of Captain Lech's promotion in October of 2022.

The Records Bureau is responsible for the storage and appropriate dissemination of the public documents generated by the police department. These include investigation reports, operations reports, traffic crash reports and traffic summonses.

The Open Public Records Act (OPRA) allows the public to obtain records to which they are entitled. As a result of this legislation, the personal information of victims and others is also protected against improper use. The Records Bureau ensures the police department is in compliance with the act.

Many duties fall under the control of the Records Bureau. The records clerks handle proper filing of investigation, operations, arrests, juvenile custody, and vehicle reports. The data developed from the investigation, adult arrest and juvenile custody reports are compiled to ensure proper Uniform Crime Reporting.

In 2022, 3,384 reports (investigation, operation, crash, arrest, DWI, vehicle, etc.) were filed by police officers which is a slight increase from the 3,150 that were filed in 2021. In addition to these reports, 271 reports were submitted by citizens via the Citizens Online Police Reporting System or Coplogic for short. Coplogic is accessed from the Lawrence Township website and is available for citizens to report incidents that are non-emergent in nature. Once the online report is submitted, a police officer reviews it and determines what additional action is necessary.

Each day the Records Bureau clerks handle numerous requests for reports. Requests generally consist of citizens asking for a motor vehicle crash report or investigation report. During 2022, the Records Bureau handled 1048 requests for motor vehicle crash and investigation reports. These requests include persons walking up to the Records window, requests by phone, fax, email and those handled by mail. In addition to these requests there were an additional 1,784 requests processed by email.

Records

Another significant portion of the records clerks' daily assignment consists of processing attorney discovery requests. In 2022, the Records Bureau handled discovery requests on 381 traffic cases. They also handled discovery requests for 241 Lawrence Police criminal cases for a total of 622 discovery requests. The slight increase of discovery requests in 2022 is directly related to the courts beginning to open after the pandemic. This number is expected to increase significantly 2023.

All subpoenas issued for officers through the Mercer County Superior Court, Lawrence Township Municipal Court or other jurisdictions are initially handled by Records Bureau staff.

In 2022, 156 subpoenas were reviewed and logged. They were then transferred to either the Patrol or Investigation Divisions to be served on officers for a variety of court cases.

The Records Bureau staff continues to conduct general background investigations for other police departments, law enforcement agencies and the various branches of the United States military services. The Records Bureau conducted an estimated 5 to 10 background investigations per week. In 2022, Records Bureau staff completed 18 letters of good conduct and processed the expungement of 462 records at the direction of the Mercer County Superior Court. The expungement of records significantly increased in 2022 by 161%.

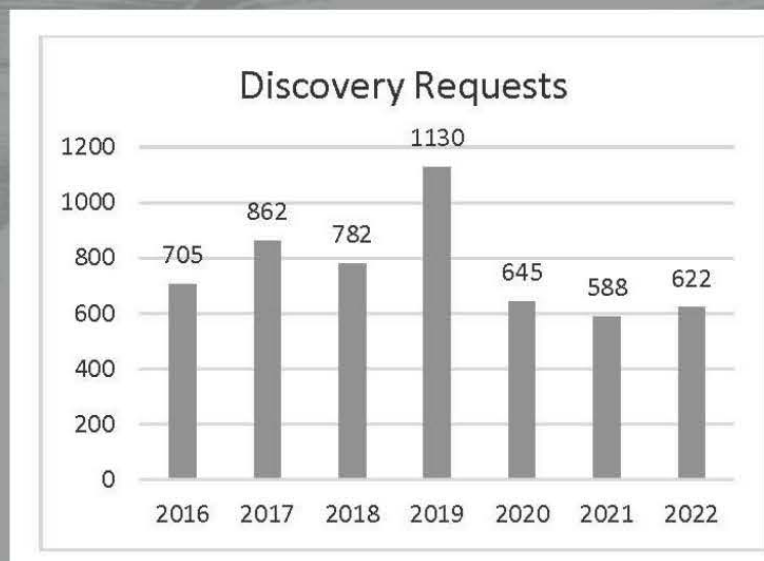
In 2019, the department entered into an agreement with LexisNexis to utilize their eCrash system. The eCrash system enables records clerks to electronically transfer completed crash reports to the eCrash system at the same time the reports are being uploaded to the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The reports are then available to citizens and insurance companies through the eCrash website for a nominal fee, a portion of which is paid to the Township. Use of the eCrash system comes at no cost to the Township, and has increased the efficiency of the Records Bureau and the convenience to the public. In 2022, 1093 crash reports were purchased through the eCrash system, thereby reducing the number of individual requests that records clerks needed to fulfill throughout the year.

The clerks of the Lawrence Township Police Records Bureau are responsible for compiling the court agenda for each court session held in municipal court. This process includes obtaining offense reports, summonses and other data that the municipal prosecutor will need for the preparation of each case. Court is held three days per week, with additional special sessions held on a regular basis. The majority of the court docket requires the services of the Records Bureau to "pull" the applicable records for each court case being heard. Once completed, the records must all be re-filed.

Records

Since 2017, the Records Bureau has been utilizing a paperless records system. Records personnel no longer print and file every report and store them on a shelf. All reports are kept in our computerized records management system which tracks and stores records for court, O.P.R.A. and discovery requests.

In conclusion, the Lawrence Township Police Records Bureau continues to provide the citizens of the Township, County and State with efficient record keeping and timely disbursement of all police related information.



Communications

COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

CALLS FOR SERVICE

As mentioned earlier in this report, 28,429 calls for service were generated in 2022, which represented a 6.6% decrease from the 30,433 calls for service in 2021. Also, during the course of 2022, there were 14,428 answered 9-1-1 calls. There was an average of 1,202 9-1-1 calls per month. This is a 1.5% increase from the average monthly number of calls answered in 2021. There were 900 abandoned 9-1-1 calls in 2022. There was an average of 70 abandoned 9-1-1 calls per month. This is a 51.8% decrease from the average monthly number of abandoned 9-1-1 calls received in 2021. This type of call occurs when the caller hangs up prior to the communications operator answering. Each of these calls must be investigated, as some abandoned 9-1-1 calls are requests for service, but the caller had to hang up prior to speaking with the police department.

The Lawrence Township Police Department received 1,611 calls reporting alarm activations in 2022, an increase of 1.7% alarm activations as compared to 2021.

There were 141 NCIC entries made in 2022. This is a decrease of 2.1% from the 144 NCIC entries made in 2021. Additionally, there were 10 NICB entries. An NICB entry is made when a vehicle is recovered and towed by the Police Department but the owner of the vehicle could not be notified.

2022 COMMUNICATIONS STATISTICS

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>	<u>% CHANGE</u>
CALLS FOR SERVICE	30,433	28,429	2,004	-6.6%
9-1-1 EMERGENCY CALLS	12,907	14,428	1,521	1.5%
9-1-1 ABANDONED CALLS	1,864	900	964	-51.8%
ALARMS (BURGLAR, FIRE, HOLDUP, ETC.)	1,584	1,611	27	1.7%
NCIC ALARM ENTRIES	144	141	3	-2.1%

** This change is based on monthly averages*

Communications

The Township of Lawrence studied the cost effectiveness of having a private company provide the dispatch services for the Police Department. As such, on April 1st, 2013, IXP Corporation began providing dispatching services. As a result of this agreement many administrative tasks no longer require work from a police employee. For example, IXP staffs the communication center 24 hours per day. If one of their employees needs to take a day off, for any reason, IXP ensures the position is covered.

Captain Joseph Lech is the liaison to the IXP Corporation and has general oversight of communications operations. Training and policy review is conducted by Sergeant Matthew Grossi, who is assigned as the department's NCIC/CJIS Officer, which assures the integrity of computer crime files as required by federal and state standards. Captain Lech and Sgt Grossi work closely with the IXP site manager. The on-duty Lawrence Township Police Department shift commander retains the authority to direct the communication operators in their daily activities.

The Lawrence Township Police Department has agreements with Mercer County regarding the dispatching of fire and emergency medical service calls. When calls for service regarding requests for fire or emergency medical services are received in the Lawrence Township Police Department Communication Center, they are answered by IXP Corporation communication operators who then forward the calls to Mercer County Central Communications for the dispatching of fire and emergency medical services. The IXP Corporation communication operator then dispatches police personnel to the scene. These agreements allow for a more effective and efficient dispatching of police, fire and ambulance personnel. Mercer County Central Communications can coordinate fire and hazmat apparatus and mutual aid fire companies, as well as the response of emergency medical personnel, especially mutual aid resources, more effectively than Lawrence Township Police communications operators alone. These actions free the communications operator to direct the police response.



Traffic Safety

TRAFFIC BUREAU

Lieutenant Joseph Caloiaro was assigned as the commander of the Traffic Bureau for 2022. The lieutenant who runs the bureau is designated as the Traffic Safety Officer.

The police department has two platoons and each platoon has an advanced traffic crash investigator assigned. These officers investigate motor vehicle crashes, conduct motor vehicle enforcement, and assist with other duties as directed.

The Traffic Bureau specializes in assessing the traffic needs of the township. This includes timely deployment of officers based on crash data and traffic complaints. The Traffic Safety Officer also works with contractors and transportation departments as well as the Lawrence Township Engineering Office to develop, review, and inspect temporary traffic control zones for any work occurring on a roadway to ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic. The Traffic Safety Officer also coordinates with the Lawrence Township Board of Education to evaluate and assess the traffic safety needs of the district.

Lieutenant Joseph Caloiaro was the liaison between the Township of Lawrence and Motivated Security, which is a private company that was hired in 2021 to take over the responsibilities of hiring and staffing of all of the 17 township school posts. In 2022, the Traffic Safety Officer conducted training for the Motivated Security crossing guards two times per school year, once just prior to school beginning in the fall and a refresher course conducted at the beginning of the calendar year.

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH STATISTICS – 2022

Traffic crashes increased from 1,155 in 2021 to 1,174 in 2022. The majority of collisions were same direction (rear end) crashes. The most common contributing factor causing the crashes was driver inattention (27%). Within the 1174 crashes, 295 accidents resulted in reported injuries in 2022. During 2022 there were 13 crashes involving pedestrians and 7 crashes involving bicyclists.

In 2022, there were two fatalities reported in the crash reports for the Lawrence Police which was identical as 2021.

Traffic Safety

The location with the single highest number of intersection crashes was Brunswick Pike at Franklin Corner Road/Bakers Basin Road, with 91 crashes (this includes Northbound and Southbound sides of the intersection). The second highest intersection crash location was Brunswick Circle, with 61 crashes. This includes all intersections of the circle. The third highest intersection crash location was the Brunswick Pike at the Kelly Via Duct with 48 crashes.

The roadways with the highest total number of crashes were Brunswick Pike with 338 crashes and Lawrence Road with 147 crashes. Police officers are directed to conduct traffic enforcement activities in these areas to help prevent future crashes.

Total Crash reports: Year 2021- 1155 Year 2022- 1174

Crashes with injuries: Year 2021- 245 Year 2022- 295

Pedestrian Involved: Year 2021- 18 Year 2022- 13

Bicyclist Involved: Year 2021- 6 Year 2022- 7

Fatalities: Year 2021- 2 Year 2022- 2

2022 Highest Motor Vehicle Crash Locations at Intersections

1. Brunswick Pike at Franklin Corner Road/Bakers Basin Road.....	91
2. Brunswick Circle.....	61
3. Brunswick Pike at Kelly via Duct.....	48
4. Whitehead Rd at Trenton Freeway.....	40
5. Brunswick Pike at 295 interchange.....	36
6. Whitehead Road Circle.....	33
7. Brunswick Pike at Quakerbridge Road.....	28
8. Grover's Mill Road and Quakerbridge Road.....	17
9. Bakers Basin at Greenberg Road.....	12
10. Princeton Avenue at Spruce Street.....	12

Traffic Safety

2022 Highest Motor Vehicle Crash Roadways

1. Brunswick Pike	338
2. Lawrence Road	147
3. Quakerbridge Road.....	94
4. Franklin Corner Road.....	93
5. Princeton Pike.....	81
6. Brunswick Circle.....	61
7. Trenton Freeway.....	58
8. Princeton Avenue.....	51
9. Bakers Basin.....	47
10. Spruce Street.....	25

TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

The total number of motor vehicle summonses issued by the officers was 2635 for 2022.

Additionally, during 2022, officers apprehended 31 intoxicated drivers traveling on the roadways of Lawrence Township. In 2021, there were 40 cases of intoxicated drivers.

During 2021, Officers conducted 1247 documented traffic enforcement posts. In 2022, 1024 traffic enforcement posts were conducted. Traffic enforcement posts create a visual deterrence when motorists observe conspicuously placed marked police vehicles. Traffic enforcement posts target high crash areas and locations where there are a high volume of motor vehicle violations. There is a direct correlation between increased traffic enforcement posts and the decrease of motor vehicle crashes / violations in those specifically targeted areas.

During 2022, the Traffic Bureau continued to have Patrol Officers certified in the use of RADAR for speeding enforcement. There are also Officers certified in the use of LIDAR to combat speeding violations. LIDAR is a speed monitoring device that works using laser technology as opposed to traditional RADAR.

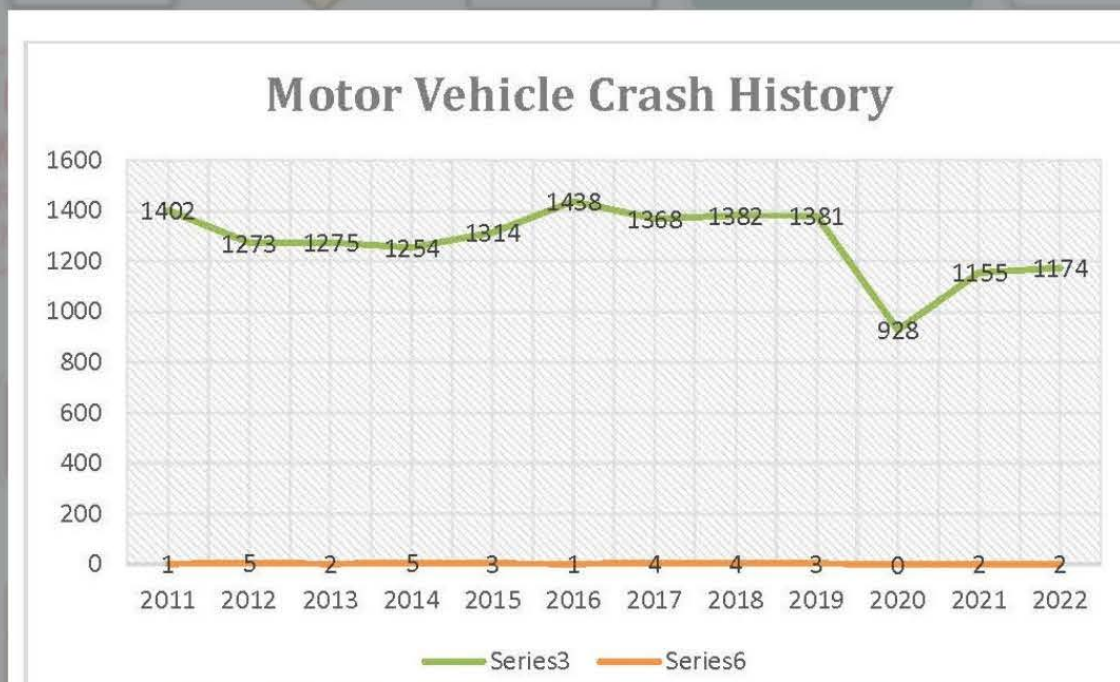
Traffic Safety

The Traffic Bureau also conducted numerous traffic surveys in 2022. The results of the surveys are shared with the township engineer's office for needs evaluation for traffic calming devices or engineering changes. The results are also used to direct motor vehicle enforcement activities by the police officers.

TRAFFIC UNIT VISION

With the ever-growing concerns for traffic safety within our community, the need for a full-time Traffic Unit within the police department has become necessary. Going forward into 2023, the development of a Traffic Unit will be a priority. This Unit will be able to address citizen complaints related to speeding, aggressive driving, and overall safety on our roadways. The vision of a Traffic Unit will be to conduct motor vehicle crash investigations, which will keep the members of this unit up to date with crash trends and roadway hazards. Working with the Township Engineering Office to conduct traffic studies, evaluate proper signage & roadway engineering, will also be part of regular responsibilities of the Traffic Unit.

With the additional residential and commercial building around the Township, there has been a steading increase in the volume of traffic throughout the Township. This fact, coupled with many residents returning to in-person jobs as COVID-19 slows, has created an increased trend in motor vehicle crashes since 2020. Over the past three years, motor vehicle crashes have steadily increased toward the 10-year high, which occurred in 2016.



In Closing

This past year has not been without its challenges. Not just for our agency but for our residents as well. I would like to let our residents know that we know this. We see this. We here at the Lawrence Township Police Department make it our priority to listen to our residents' concerns.

In spite of these challenges, I am thankful to have the support and understanding from members of our community. My officers and I are proud (and fortunate) to serve a community such as Lawrence Township.

Our Accreditation status with the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, is a testament to the quality and caliber of Officers (and services) that we expect our officers to provide. This prestigious certification is reserved only for agencies that meet the highest standards in the field of public service.

One of the main pillars of Community Policing is to create, promote and strengthen the bonds of partnership between the police agency and the community it serves. Our officers have risen to that challenge.

We are looking forward to 2023. Even though the new year will have its own new challenges, there is nothing that we cannot overcome as long as we move into the new year together. As always, I will continue to do my best to improve the partnership between our community and the police department.

Christopher Longo
Chief of Police



"This world of ours... must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect."

-Dwight D. Eisenhower-