

DEERFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mission Statement

"We, the members of the Deerfield Police Department, are committed to excellence in law enforcement and are dedicated to the people, traditions and diversity of Deerfield. In order to protect life and property, prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime, we will provide service with understanding, response with compassion, performance with integrity and law enforcement with vision."

I am pleased to present to you the 2024 Deerfield Police Department Annual Report. The officers, supervisors, and staff continue to work hard to deliver a superior service to the residents of Deerfield.

Staffing

The Deerfield Police Department is comprised of the Chief of Police, three (3) full-time police Sergeants, seven (7) additional full-time Officers, nine (9) part-time Officers and one (1) Administrative Assistant. Officers are organized into three shifts with two officers per shift who are accessible to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. On each shift, there is one Officer assigned to the Old Deerfield area (District Two), and one officer assigned to South Deerfield (District One). This ensures that residents across town get equal response and patrol time.

The Police Department employs a full-time Administrative Assistant who performs a variety of complex and highly confidential administrative, technical, and general support duties to assist the police department, police Chief, and emergency management team. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for equipment acquisition, fleet maintenance, accounts receivable /payable, document review, preparing discovery for court, and assisting citizens in the lobby and over the phone. Cassandra Jerome is entering her second year as our Administrator. She brings with her a unique set of skills including ten years of knowledge and experience working at the Northwestern District Attorney's Office as a Superior Court Paralegal and the Franklin County Office Supervisor. Her knowledge of the criminal justice system and day-to-day office operations has been a great asset to the police department. In her short time here, she has streamlined processes to go paperless, brought us into the modern century, and assisted the Emergency Management Director with storm damage matters among other projects. This year, she became the President of the Chiefs of Police Administrator's Association.

New to the department this year after an extensive search is Officer Tanner Finch, who graduated from the MPTC Full Time Police Academy in October. Officer Finch grew up in Deerfield and Sunderland and attended Frontier High School where he was a member of the Wrestling Team. He looks forward to helping his hometown community.

Officer Gary Sibilia retired after 50 years in Law Enforcement, many of those years spent working part-time here in Deerfield. Gary is known to bring a smile to the faces of those around him and for his love of all things Law Enforcement. Officer Fitzgerald moved across the state to join Newbury Police Department and enjoy the beach. As these wonderful officers move forward in their new careers and enjoy their retirements, they will be greatly missed, and we wish them the best. We continue to search to find new officers to help fill these vacancies.

We continue to navigate the challenges that the POST laws regarding police staffing creates within our agency with staffing shortages and difficulty finding new officers. In the past years we have been known as a reputable training ground for part-time personnel who would become exceptional full-time officers for our agency and others. However, with new POST standards there are no longer academies to train part-time personnel. We employ many retired full-time officers that bring a lifetime of experience and help us fill open shifts while we search for another full-time officer.

Co-Response

The Regional Co-Response program continues to expand. Currently, Kaitlin Richotte-Rock and Katherine Russell (LICSW) serve the Deerfield Community as well as Greenfield and Montague Police through his program. Kaitlin is the Assistant Program Director for the Co-Response programs through Clinical and Support Options (CSO) and helps in overseeing both the Franklin and Hampshire County Co-Response teams. Kaitlin holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a double minor in Criminal Justice and Substance Use as well as a Master of Arts with a focus in Forensic Mental Health Counseling. Kaitlin is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. She is an outstanding asset to our community. Katherine earned her master's in social work at Savannah State University and holds her clinical license in South Carolina and Massachusetts. Katherine's previous clinical work with populations suffering from chronic mental illness, substance use disorders, and the incarcerated population has provided her the necessary experience to be an incredible asset in assisting police departments as they respond to their community members in moments of crisis.

We are excited to see the Regional Co-Responder program grow through grant funding by The Department of Mental Health (DMH) jail diversion initiative. Sgt. Bartak has authored and oversees this grant which allows the department to offer officers 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and other mental health-related training courses. These trainings allow officers to better understand and respond to people in a mental health crisis. This grant provides officers weekly opportunities to collaborate with the Co-Responder in the three designated communities to mental health emergencies. Follow-up services and options after a crisis are provided as well. We are proud to have been a part of the pilot Co-Responder program, which has now expanded to many other towns and police departments across Franklin County. This year with funds from the grant, Clinician Katherine and Officer Capuano travelled to Indianapolis, Indiana to the International CIT Conference to learn more about police and mental health agencies working together to serve the Deerfield residents.

The CIT programs is a first-responder model of police-based crisis intervention training to assist people with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorder. CIT Officers effectively divert people in mental health crisis away from jail and refer them to the appropriate local community service providers, promoting safety for officers and the individual in crisis. The program aims to overcome the negative stigma associated with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorder and connect people with appropriate services. In 2024, Deerfield officers responded to 109 specifically mental-health related calls for service, of which 94 had specially trained CIT officers respond. The program was able to divert 9 incidents from a criminal charge into mental health treatment, diverting the parties from jail into treatment.

Our officers are also working with the Opioid Task Force CONNECT Program. This program connects people who have experienced or witnessed Opioid overdoses with free and confidential support programming with recovery coaches within 72-hours of an overdose. Statistics have shown that the most successful time to get a person experiencing addiction into recovery is within 72 hours (about 3 days) of the overdose event. This program also includes a database that is statewide to identify high risk candidates who have overdosed in multiple jurisdictions and connect them with support services.

The Opioid Task Force has expanded this year in an initiative to help the Unhoused community in Franklin County. They have started a community Warming Shelter for nights below 20 degrees and assist with getting needed supplies to the unhoused.

Equipment

The police department continues to replace one cruiser annually. This is due to the mileage driven, idle time, and wear and tear on an emergency vehicle. With two personnel on duty twenty-four hours a day, our annual mileage is around 140,000 miles. We continue to be conscious of our carbon footprint, and we are excited to announce that our patrol fleet of vehicles are all Hybrid. These Hybrid cars are proving to use about half the fuel as the fully gas-powered cruisers. Some of our cruisers are being equipped with trunk-vaults to keep emergency equipment organized and accessible.

We have moved to using Electronic Citations, with in-car printers. In the past, we used handwritten carbon copy citations that required manual entry and mailing to the RMV. Electronic Citations are sent to the RMV at the time of issuance electronically and are printed out in the car.

This year we began the process for a new HVAC system that is energy-efficient and replaces our old outdated system. As part of this transition, we cleaned out and organized years of old records in compliance with the state public records guidelines, to make space. Four tons of old records were shredded and properly recycled.

Calls for Service

The Department is very active in responding to calls for service. Calls for service within this area are defined as requiring police action; this does not include mere directions, parties that come to our station to speak with officers, administrative duties such as LTC renewals, or questions. Officers also respond to all fire and medical calls when available. Officers are often first on scene and assist with rendering emergency medical aid and if needed, traffic control, and are authorized to drive the ambulance to a medical facility. The total number of assigned calls for service for the 2024 calendar year was 22,637. This is an average of 62 calls for service on the average day, including patrols and business checks.

There were 140 arrests, 288 active investigations, 109 motor vehicle crashes, 998 motor vehicle stops, and 473 medical emergencies in 2024. Our officers also helped in responding to over 109 mental health-related calls and worked diligently with Crisis Services to ensure that our residents received the best possible available care and follow-up treatments. With the new program, 9 people this year were diverted from being arrested. Treatment options were explored instead of criminal charges.

Our Officers patrol all areas of the Town of Deerfield, looking for any unusual activity, while keeping all residents and visitors' safety in mind, making notifications to the utility companies as well as reporting any road hazards to the appropriate highway agency. We continue to have open communication with business owners and perform business checks daily. Officers continue to perform vacant house checks and provide target traffic enforcement in problem areas. We respond to areas of concern from citizen reports, and work to mitigate those problems through targeted enforcement.

Our officers work diligently to solve fraud, crimes against property, as well as against persons, but due to the sensitive nature of some of these crimes we cannot include them in this report to protect the privacy of the victims.

Officers on road patrol perform law enforcement patrol activities including, but not limited to, arresting violators of the law, checking on property and persons, conducting security checks of buildings, and dwellings, investigating traffic crashes, and enforcing traffic offenses, such as Operating Under the Influence (OUI) investigations. Aside from road patrol, these officers also assist with criminal investigations, including searching for missing persons, runaways, and wanted persons. Activity is documented in reports, logs and calls for service as officers are responsible for presenting testimony and evidence in court. The Police Department daily logs are available on the Department's website. They can be found on the bottom right-hand corner, under "Weekly Logs." This allows the residents to view the day-to-day activities, as well as research events that may have transpired in your area.

This year we had an increase in serious motor vehicle crashes and investigations, including 25 arrests for Operating Under the Influence of drugs or alcohol. 2024 saw an increase in serious motor vehicle crashes including one fatality, many serious injuries, and one crash into a house that caused a fire. Our officers work diligently to save lives and investigate each incident to hold offenders accountable.

Throughout 2024, the Deerfield Police Department continued to have an officer assigned to the Northwestern District Attorney's Anti-Crime Task Force (NDATF) on a full-time basis however, due to staffing shortages our task force officer has been covering shifts as well.

The investigations, arrests, and search warrant executions conducted by NDATF personnel in 2024 resulted in multiple felony arrests, seizures of trafficking weight quantities of narcotics, seizures of substantial amounts of US Currency, seizures of stolen property, as well as the seizures of illegal firearms and ammunition.

During 2024, investigators with the NDATF initiated 125 cases, conducted 112 controlled purchases of narcotics, and seized narcotics on an additional 143 occasions, resulting in 139 arrests in our area. The NDATF also applied for, and were granted, 77 search warrants. In addition to the narcotics seizures made by the NDATF, investigators also produced the following (approximate) seizures:

- Firearms- 13
- Vehicles seized- 4
- US Currency seized- \$47,885.24

As a member of the NDATAF, our Task Force Officer also regularly collaborates with other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

In 2024, our Task Force Officer partnered with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as they conducted a wiretap investigation targeting a high-level drug trafficking organization. As a result of the investigation, search warrants were granted and executed on ten locations in Massachusetts and one location in Puerto Rico. In total during the wiretap investigation, approximately thirteen (13) kilograms of cocaine, \$100,000.00 in U.S. Currency, and \$350,000.00 in vehicles were seized. In addition to the seizures, prosecutors were able to bring Massachusetts state cocaine trafficking charges (200+ grams) on fourteen individuals, and a federal firearms charge on one.

These investigators continue to work meticulously and conduct thorough investigations to keep illegal and dangerous narcotics out of our town.

In addition to the NDATAF, the Northwestern District Attorney's Office and Deerfield Police Department have joined with the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force. The NWDA received a grant to focus on more training in Human Trafficking and child exploitation crimes. This task force aims to keep children safe online and more effectively investigate and bring perpetrators to justice. Officer Marissa Smith works with this task force and has received specialized training in child abuse and internet crimes. Officer Smith along with team members investigated and charged perpetrators of multiple child exploitative crimes this year.

Events

We annually support and work to coordinate safe events at Eaglebrook, Deerfield Academy, Bement School, PMVA, Franklin Land Trust, and Yankee Candle Company. Expect to see more out-of-town officers assisting us at these events. Officers provided traffic control and safety for sixteen concerts as well as a half-marathon hosted by Treehouse Brewing. We also assisted with the Triad spaghetti supper to raise money to assist senior citizens. This year's annual Halloween Hayride was the best attended so far due to beautiful weather, filling ten hay wagons with excited community members and children. Thank you to all of our mutual aid partners for assistance in 2024 and years to come.

Training

December 31, 2020, Governor Charles Baker signed the Criminal Justice Reform Act into law. We continue to navigate the changes to our and other small agencies with the elimination of the part-time police academy – thereby eliminating most part-time personnel in the State. In addition, there have been modifications of Use of Force Standards, as well as many additional requirements for Police Officer certification. These changes will have a large financial impact on the vast majority of communities under ten thousand, and more especially Deerfield's size and smaller. Many of the small towns' police departments (population 500-3,000) will cease to exist.

This year members of our department attended specialized training in:

Crisis Intervention including the CIT conference to learn advanced de-escalation methods and programs that are available through the mental health system.

Cyber Crimes Conference to learn about ever-changing technology and how it is being used in criminal activity as well as how to use technology in investigations to solve and prove crimes.

All officers participated in hands-on scenario based Active Shooter Training at Frontier High School led by the Massachusetts State Police STOP team in which officers participated in live fire simmunition (blank) scenarios.

TASER training where officers participated in live-action scenarios where they worked to de-escalate an armed suspect and were able to simulate live-fire with Velcro-like cartridges and an instructor wearing a protective suit.

Firearms training including low light as well as scenarios that involve de-escalation and different use of force scenarios in a special firearms trailer. We also trained with our shields and ballistic equipment and transitioning between rifles and pistols while moving and using scenario-based training.

All officers completed in-service training that includes Firearms, Use of Force, Legal Updates, CPR and First Responder, Taser, Rules of the Road, OUI Refresher, Reports and Testimony, Police Reform and POST Commission, Officer Wellness.

Grants

Grants continue to be scarce within law enforcement with the vast majority going to large cities with exceptionally high crime data statistics.

The Department of Mental Health grant covers the Co-Response program that we share with Greenfield and Montague. The grant covers a CIT trained officer to ride with the Co-Responder to respond to mental health related called in Deerfield, Greenfield, and Montague. The grant also covers training expenses to send officers to the 40-hour CIT training, as well as other relevant mental health response training for police

School Safety

We are in constant partnership to make sure the schools are as safe as possible. As most are aware, this is challenging since Deerfield has five schools; Deerfield Elementary, Frontier Regional High School, Bement, Eaglebrook, and Deerfield Academy. In total there are over 2,500 students in Deerfield. This does not include school staff. The schools, including students and staff, bring in a daily influx of over 4,000 people.

As part of school safety, we have an active partnership and leadership role in the four-town safety committee which is comprised of EMS, Police, Fire, and School Officials from all Union 38 schools and towns. This includes quarterly meetings, active shooter training, lockdown drills, and shelter in place drills, as well as annual review of school safety documents and plans. Officers have participated in specialized training in active shooter/ active threat scenarios.

Sergeant Ravish who is the School Resource Officer worked to educate students in health classes about the dangers of drugs and addictions and participated in a seminar in the social studies classes about safety awareness and dangers of the world. He also educated students on the dangers of drunk driving with the pedal car course, which each school participated in and is a very eye-opening exercise. He hopes to re-start the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) class in 2025 which has not run since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Initiatives

Sergeant Bartak and other police leaders in the community worked to start the Franklin County Police Cadet Program this year where interested youth ages 14-21 can get experience and learn about all aspects of law enforcement. Sergeant Bartak and team hosted a cadet academy each Wednesday night where the students learned about criminal law, constitutional law, motor vehicle law, defensive tactics, environmental law, stop sticks, mental health and co-response, among many other helpful and relevant topics in the field of criminal justice. Some of the members of the Cadet program also volunteered their time to assist with community fundraisers and built great relationships with citizens and local departments. We hope that as they get older some of these cadets will become police officers and work with us.

On January 1, 2018, I started as the President of the Franklin County Chiefs of Police Association. I am also the Franklin County appointed representative to the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Executive Board (since 2014). In addition, I serve as the police representative to the Western Mass. Homeland Security Council, which has been a Governor's appointment (since 2015). I was also appointed in 2022 as the Statewide Law Enforcement Liaison on the State Child Fatality Review Team. There are eleven regional teams across the State that report their findings to the State Team.

As always, the Deerfield Police Department is dedicated to serving the community, residents, and visitors to the Town of Deerfield. As the days, months, and years continue to pass, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have a question or concern, we are available 24/7 365 days a year.

Sincerely,

John P. Paciorek, Jr.
Chief of Police
Emergency Management Director

"PROTECTING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITY"

The Law Enforcement Oath of Honor

On my honor, I will never betray my badge, my integrity, my character, or the public trust. I will always have the courage to hold myself and others accountable for our actions. I will always uphold the Constitution, my community and the agency I serve.