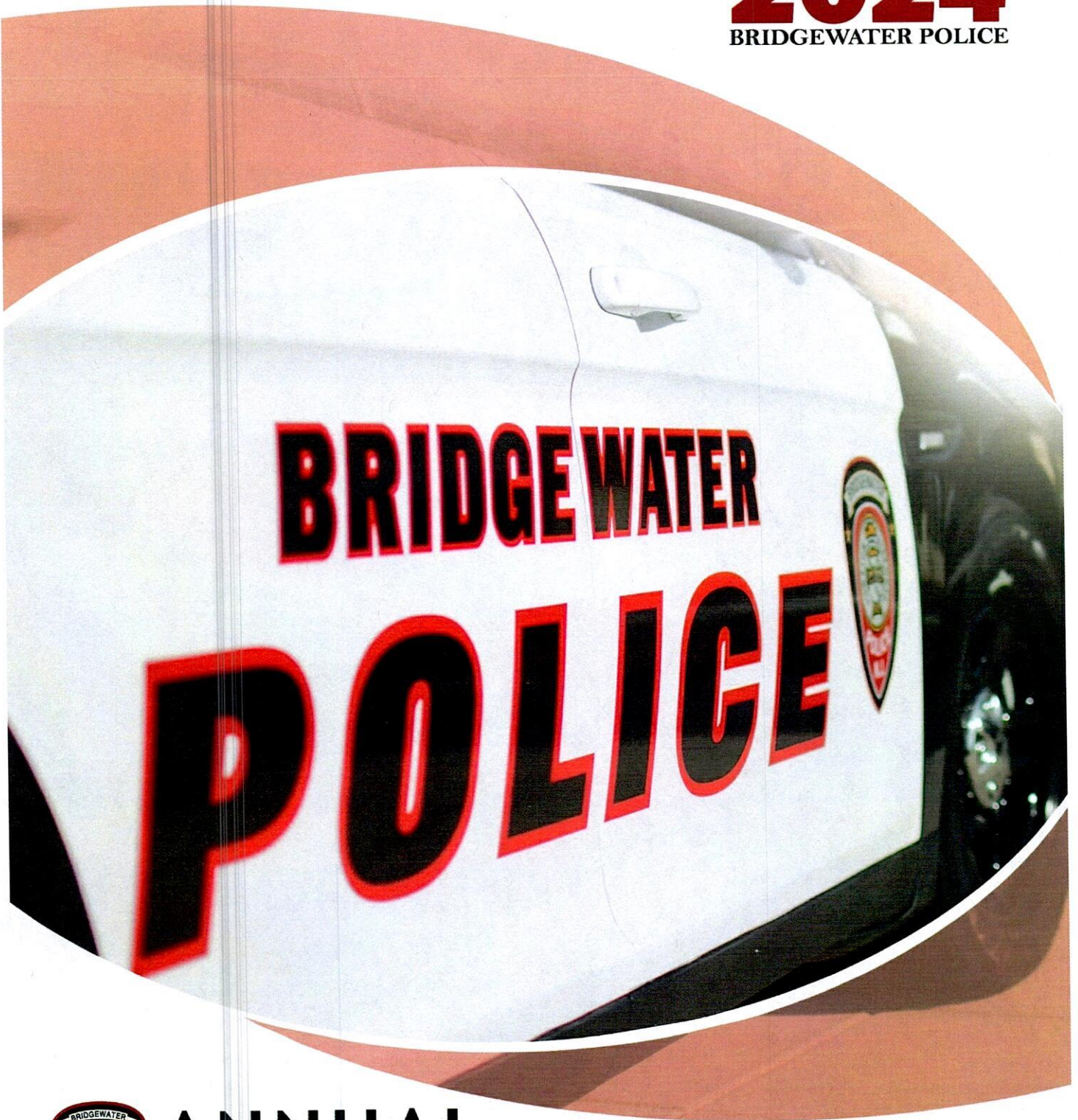


**2024**  
BRIDGEWATER POLICE



# ANNUAL REPORT

Chief John Mitzak

**2024 ANNUAL REPORT**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction  
Roster  
Community Police Alliance  
Accreditation

**PART I      Police Department Bureaus**

Patrol  
Criminal Investigation Bureau  
Youth Services Bureau  
Traffic Safety Bureau  
Technical Services Bureau  
Records Bureau  
Licensing Bureau  
Professional Development /Training

**PART II      Collateral Duties**

Awards  
Domestic Violence  
False Alarms Report  
Firearms Training  
Internal Affairs Unit  
Municipal Court  
Patrol Fleet  
Special Events

**PART III      Statistics**

Calls for Service  
Domestic Violence  
Motor Vehicle Crashes  
Driving While Intoxicated Arrests  
Patrol Vehicle Mileage  
Uniform Crime Report Statistics  
Youth Service Bureau Graphs  
Criminal Investigations Bureau Graph  
Traffic Safety Bureau Chart  
Municipal Court Overtime Graphs (Bridgewater & Somerville)  
Fire and Emergency Medical Services Graph  
Monthly Operations Activity Statistics



## **Introduction**

In 2024, the Bridgewater Police Department proudly marked our 59th year of dedicated service to the residents of Bridgewater Township. Our mission remains steadfast: to protect, assist, and serve our community with unwavering commitment and professionalism. We strive to be leaders in law enforcement by fostering strong community partnerships, ensuring operational efficiency, and upholding values of transparency while proactively addressing the needs and concerns of our residents.

This year's annual report offers a detailed look at our performance, including numerous statistical charts and graphs for your review. Equally important, however, are the community programs and enduring relationships we have cultivated with Bridgewater residents over the past year.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited to strengthen these partnerships and remain passionately committed to excellence in service. 2024 was a year of significant milestones for the Bridgewater Police Department. Notably, we hosted our first-ever Women's Self-Defense class, which was met with an overwhelming response from the community. Over three days, more than 30 women from Bridgewater participated, gaining valuable skills and confidence. Additionally, we organized "Bridgewater Night Out," a phenomenally successful event in collaboration with the Bridgewater Township Recreation Department and local residents. This event brought together thousands of Bridgewater citizens, providing them with an opportunity to meet and engage with our officers in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

As we reflect on 2024, we are proud of how our department has continued to evolve and adapt to the dynamic landscape of modern policing while maintaining the essential services that ensure the safety and well-being of our community. Looking ahead, we are committed to building on our community-based initiatives and further enhancing our officers' training to meet the challenges of the changing times. Our focus remains on crime prevention, leveraging advanced technology, and fostering a safe, secure environment for all who live, work, and visit Bridgewater Township.

My team and I look forward to continued support and collaboration from the Township Administration and Town Council as we embark on the 2025 calendar year, with an unwavering commitment to our shared goal of a safer, stronger Bridgewater.

The Bridgewater Township Police Department will continue to maintain our established maxim "Dedicated to Service, Committed to Community." Our Mission Statement, along with our Core Values, serves as a standard of expectations that we demand and expect from each Officer.

## **Mission Statement**

“Ensuring Justice and Harmony through Community Collaboration and Constitutional Policing.”

## **Core Values**

**Service:** Providing services and resources that are responsive to the needs of every citizen in our community.

**Integrity:** We adhere to the honest, fair, and ethical treatment of the people with whom we interact while promoting justice and fulfilling our duty to uphold the law.

**Compassion:** We exercise empathy and provide aid to all people who require our assistance.

**Pride:** We possess pride in our profession, holding ourselves to higher principles and standards in the performance of our duties and personal conduct.

**Respect:** We respect the rights and beliefs of others and have an appreciation for the diversity of our community.

## **2024 Goals Met**

**Bridgewater Township Police Department Women’s Self Defense Class–** Our goal for 2024 was to host/instruct a Citizen’s Police Academy. Unfortunately, due to low interest we had to cancel the class. However, when we advertised a Women’s Self Defense Class we received over 40 applications. Over three days, more than 30 women from Bridgewater participated, gaining valuable skills and confidence in self-defense and Jiu- Jitsu.

**Department Wide Training-** We have developed a training program that sets us apart from all departments. All officers are reassigned once a month to a 10-hour training day. Training includes tactics, self-defense, and relevant current event topics. The department has highly trained self-defense experts within our ranks who are training every officer on the proper NJ Attorney General approved techniques on self-defense and use of force. Lieutenant Dolinski and Lieutenant Thorsen are the lead instructors.

**Community Policing-** Due to staffing levels we were not able to dedicate a full-time unit to Community Policing. Despite not having a full-time unit, officers made numerous presentations to local groups or businesses in the topics of: Fraud, Elderly Scams, Safe



Driving, Active Shooter, and Self –defense. Officers also worked side by side with the Community Police Alliance Coordinator assisting residents in need.

## **2025 Goals**

**Bridgewater Township Police Department Citizens' Police Academy-** Department Personnel will instruct community volunteers through a 9-week (1 night a week) citizen's police academy introducing various topics for discussion and interaction. The academy will be used as a community policing tool for our residents to better understand what a police officer does or might have to do during a workday. This class will start on March 6<sup>th</sup> and finish on May 1, 2025.

**Bridgewater PD LPR and Drone Program -** License Plate Readers (LPR) and drones play a crucial role in enhancing police operations and public safety. LPRs enable law enforcement to efficiently scan and identify vehicles of interest, improving the ability to track stolen cars, enforce traffic laws, and solve crimes more quickly. Drones provide an invaluable aerial perspective, allowing officers to monitor large areas, conduct search-and-rescue operations, and gather real-time intelligence in difficult or hazardous situations. Both technologies help improve response times, reduce workforce needs, and increase the overall effectiveness of law enforcement. By integrating LPRs and drones into policing, the Bridgewater Police Department can enhance their initiative-taking crime prevention efforts while ensuring greater safety for officers and the community.

**Internship with Rutgers University and Raritan Valley Community College-** We will coordinate with Rutgers University and Raritan Valley Community College to start an internship program where students can learn about the police profession firsthand and see the inner workings of our department. We believe this will help enhance recruitment for the police profession, specifically the Bridgewater Township Police Department. Our first intern will start in February 2025.

**Hiring and Training of five police recruits-** Preparing five police recruits for solo patrol once they graduate from the Morris County Police Academy in June 2025. This requires comprehensive training that emphasizes both practical skills and critical decision-making. Recruits must master field operations, including report writing, traffic stops, and handling emergency situations, while also developing strong community engagement techniques. Mentorship from experienced officers during field training ensures recruits build confidence and apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios. By the end of their training, the recruits will be equipped with the tools, knowledge, and confidence necessary to manage the responsibilities of solo patrol with professionalism and competence.

**Women's Self Defense Class-** The three-day Women's Self-Defense Class hosted by the Bridgewater Police Department offers women the opportunity to gain confidence, learn practical skills, and increase their personal safety awareness. Participants will learn

effective techniques for protecting themselves in various situations, empowering them to feel more secure in their daily lives. For the police department, the class fosters stronger community relationships, promoting trust and collaboration between law enforcement and residents. Additionally, the event helps raise awareness about crime prevention while providing valuable insight into the concerns and needs of the community.

**LEAD Training-** The LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) training provided to 5th grade students starting in September will equip them with important skills to make informed decisions about drugs and alcohol. By focusing on education and prevention, the program helps students develop resistance skills and understand the consequences of substance abuse. Additionally, this initiative fosters positive relationships between law enforcement and youth, laying the foundation for a safer, more informed community.

**Bridgewater Night Out-** Bridgewater Night Out fosters stronger community bonds by bringing residents and law enforcement officers together in a relaxed, social environment. It provides an opportunity to enhance neighborhood safety through open communication and collaboration between police and the community. Additionally, the event helps raise awareness about crime prevention and promotes community involvement in keeping the area safe and vibrant.

### **Vision Statement**

To maintain our position as recognized leaders in our community, both on and off duty, working together as a progressive, professional, and interactive agency.

To be an organization that promotes the professional development of its members.

To be an organization that continues to anticipate and influence changes.

To be recognized for excellence in service to our citizens.

To be the leading resource for community safety, education, and information.

To provide our personnel with the necessary equipment for their safe and effective job performance. My goal and vision for the police department are to deliver unsurpassed police services to the township residents and maintain our status as one of the State's top law enforcement agencies.

Chief John Mitzak



# Roster-2024

Chief John Mitzak

Captain Jeff Savare- Operations  
Captain Kevin Tennant- Administration

## Lieutenants

Lt. Joe Dolinski  
Lt. John Cooper

Lt. Fred Brittain  
Lt. Todd Mele

Lt. Peter Ochs  
Lt. Doug Thorsen

## Sergeants

Sgt. Robert Reilly    Sgt. Ryan Cerro    Sgt. Russ Dunlop    Sgt. James Edwards  
Sgt. Kevin Florczak    Sgt. Patrick Knapp    Sgt. Mike Ziarnowski    Sgt. Chris Bowers  
Sgt. Dan Hennessey (TSB)    Det. Sgt. Steve Zeichner (CIB)

## Officers:

A. Akins	N. Allat	Ad. Alosi	An. Alosi	J. Anno
J. Bezak	P. Blaydes	N. Bradshaw	M. Coletta	J. Conroy
A. Digraziano	J. Duffy	J. Fisher	F. Flores	P. Forgione
B. Forke	T. Gallo	K. Geisel	D. Giraldo	A. Giurlando
A. Gonzales	K. Grimm	J. Han	M. Hoelzel	A. Jaszyn
P. Kaczynski	J. Kennedy	T. Kochanski	M. Macchia	H. McClinton
J. McDonough	A. Mendoza	J. Newnom	T. Ossenfort	C. Rini
S. Rini	N. Rosado	A. Ruiz	M. Sanchez	B. Schubert
J. Sherman	R. Struck	M. Thiel	M. Thomsen	R. Veneman
T. Weiss	S. Woodruff	A. Zaferellis		

## Detectives:

V. Stetsko    G. VanDoren    B. Sujansky (IDO)    Ty Barnett  
C. Outerbridge    M. Leight    B. MacDonald

## Youth Services:

A. Milito    B. Eitner

## Traffic Safety Bureau:

C. Taggert    J. Greco    S. Black

## Office Manger/Records Supervisor:

Cathy Hamilton

## Records Bureau:

Stela Bogdan    Janice Mathewson    Victor Palumbo Sr.  
Joslyn Mendoza    Samantha Oates    Hannah Fuller (PT)

## Police Support Services:

Richard Larsen

## Licensing Bureau:

Robert Hanlon

## Information Technology:

William Nuse

2023 Total Employees- 88

2024 Total Employees- 89

## **Accreditation**

On June 16th, 2022, the Bridgewater Township Police Department achieved "Police Agency Accreditation" through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police. The achievement culminates three years of preparation by Accreditation Manager Lieutenant Brian Blath and Assistant Accreditation Manager Danielle Tufaro. Accreditation requires compliance with the one hundred and twelve professional standards mandated by the Accreditation Board of Review.

The accreditation commission with the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police conducted an assessment of the agency's officers and supervisors, an inspection of the facility, and a review of numerous policies to verify that the applicable standards have been successfully implemented. Accreditation provides the agency with the training and standards to maintain its professional standard with policing and personnel. The next accreditation cycle is in progress and will cover 2022, 2023 & 2024. Our next assessment will take place in the Spring of 2025.



## **Community Police Alliance-2024**

The Community Police Alliance (CPA) has received 766 referrals from both the police department and the community to date. These referrals are listed in the various categories in the table below, Mental Health, Youth, Domestic Violence and more. During 2024, via the computer aided dispatch system, the police department was able to notify CPA directly when a citizen encountered the officer to believe the citizen could benefit from the assistance of the CPA. This allowed the CPAC to receive reports from CAD entries and immediately begin work on assisting the citizens in need.

Most days of the week begin at the Somerset County Human Services office where QED/CAD reports are read, and referrals are contacted via phone or in-person. The overarching objective of the CPA is to be available and to help reduce multiple calls from the community to the Bridgewater Police Department, channeling issues and/or needs of the residents more effectively through connections to appropriate community-based resources.

The services provided by the CPA include the following:

- Advocacy and Case Management
- Referrals and Resource Coordination
- Community Outreach and Engagement
- Crisis Intervention
- Collaboration with Somerset County Organizations
  - Somerset County Board of Social Services
  - Somerset County Treatment/New Hope/Carrier Clinic
  - Safe and Sound
  - Somerset County Office on Aging & Disability Services
  - Middle Earth
  - Food Bank of Somerset County
  - Community in Crisis
  - Family Crisis Intervention Unit (FCIU)
  - PerformCare of Somerset County
  - Zufall Health Center
  - Faith Based Organizations
  - Education and Employment Programs
  - Health and Wellness Services

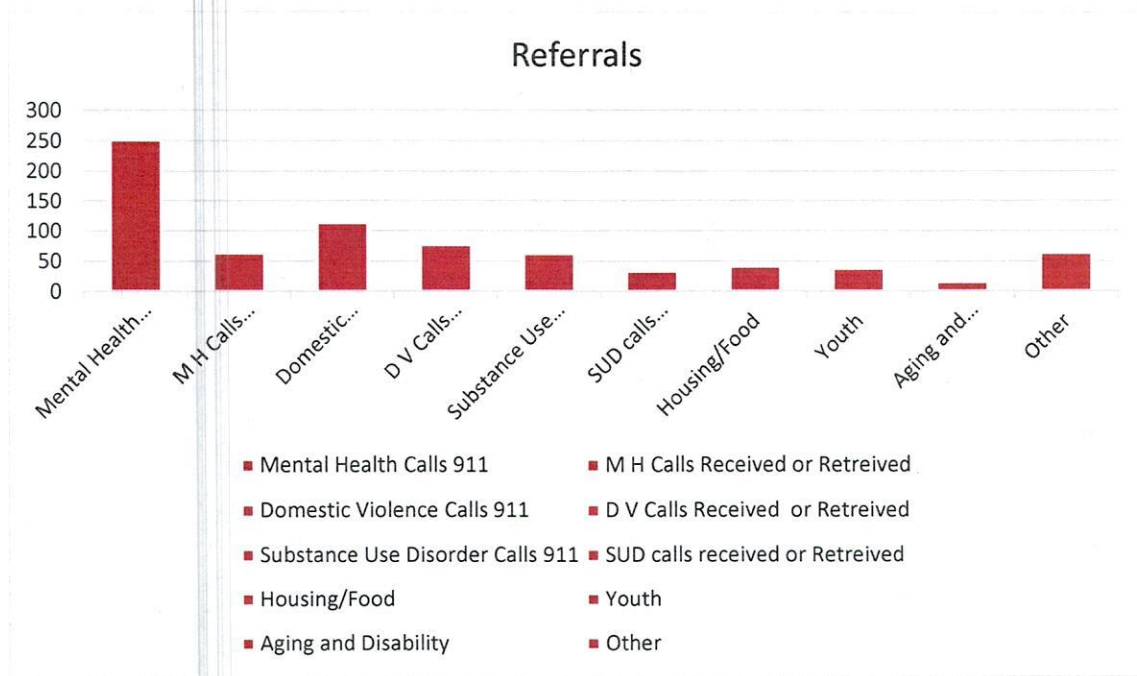
CPA staff participated in a range of professional development and community focused training during 2024. Key training topics included:

- Trauma-Informed Care
- De-escalation Techniques

- Crisis Intervention Training
- Domestic Violence Awareness and Response
- Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Support
- Mental Health First Aid
- Suicide Prevention Training
- Housing Stability and Homelessness Prevention
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- Cultural Competency Training
- Language Access and Communication
- Navigating Immigration Resources
- Legal Advocacy for Survivors



## Community Police Alliance referrals received during 2024



**MENTAL HEALTH CALLS 911 (252)**

**M.H. CALLS RECEIVED OR RETREIVED (64)**

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS 911 (115)**

**D.V. CALLS RECEIVED OR RETREIVED (78)**

**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS CALLS (63)**

**SUD CALLS RECEIVED OR RETREIVED (34)**

**HOUSING AND FOOD (42)**

**YOUTH (38)**

**AGING AND DISABILITY (16)**

**OTHER (64)**

# PART I

## POLICE DEPARTMENT BUREAUS



## PATROL

The Patrol Division (Operations) is the cornerstone of police work and makes up the largest portion of the Police Department, which serves approximately 46,000 primary residents and approximately 250,000 daily citizens. The primary duties of the Patrol Division are to protect human life, maintain order, enforce criminal law as well as motor vehicle law, investigate motor vehicle collisions, provide emergency medical services and promote community relations. Patrol Officers impartially gather facts, prepare reports and provide testimony in civil, municipal and superior courts. Patrol Officers respond to and investigate a wide variety of calls for service, to include, but are not limited to the following; domestic violence incidents, robbery, burglary, larceny, assaults, sexual assaults, homicide, missing persons (adult/juvenile). During the calendar year of 2024 the Patrol Division responded to 42,171 calls for service.

The Patrol Division is comprised of forty four Patrol Officers. The Patrol Officers are assigned to four squads with eight Sergeants supervising these squads. There are four Lieutenants who act as Watch Commanders and oversee the Sergeants and Patrol Officers. There is one Captain who is the Operations Division Commander. This Captain oversees the day to day operations of Patrol.

Each year, our Patrol Officers receive advanced training in Crash Investigations, Rifle Operations, and Emergency Medicine as EMT's. Several Patrol Officers are active members of the Somerset County Emergency Response Team (S.C.E.R.T.) responsible for SWAT, Hostage Recovery (HRT) and Dive Rescue Team. In addition, several of our Officers have collateral duties with other Somerset County teams, such as Fire Investigation and the Collision Analysis Response Team (C.A.R.T.). The advanced training and experience that our Patrol Officers bring to their daily duties allows them to be in a state of readiness to take control of the most complex incidents to ensure a successful outcome for our residents.

Goals for 2025 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increase the perception of safety within our community.
- Increase our Social Media presence so that information is transmitted in a timely manner to our community.
- Continue to provide advanced training to all officers within the agency, so that they can excel in their profession.
- Promote a positive work environment.

## **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION BUREAU**

The Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) in 2024 consisted of a Lieutenant (Fred Brittain), Detective Sergeant (Stephen Zeichner), six detectives (Michael Leight, Vincent Stetsko, Collin Outerbridge, Garret Van Doren, Tyran Barnett, Brittany MacDonald) and an identification officer (Brian Sujansky). Detective MacDonald left the unit in March on medical leave.

The identification officer is our primary evidence custodian, overseeing approximately twelve thousand seven hundred and forty-one (12,741) pieces of evidence. Zero (0) items were auctioned in 2024. The identification officer's primary function is to identify, preserve, gather, and evaluate evidence collected at crime scenes. After the evidence has been collected and evaluated, the identification officer then catalogs the evidence into our evidence vault. The identification officer's secondary duties include processing the collected items of evidence that may have fingerprints, data or DNA evidence. The identification officer's other duties include transferring evidence to the NJ State Police Lab or the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office Forensic Lab for analysis. In 2024, approximately one thousand and eighty-two (1,082) pieces of evidence were logged into the evidence vault. Fifteen (15) items of evidence were destroyed, thirty-four (34) items were returned to the owner, one hundred and eighty-six (186) items were transferred to another police agency. There were twenty-two (22) burglaries and forty three (43) motor vehicle burglaries reported within the Township, with the vast majority requiring identification work.

Detectives within CIB have a number of responsibilities as well. CIB personnel investigate adult and juvenile related crimes, conduct interviews of suspects and witnesses, conduct surveillances as well as undercover operations. Additionally, detectives identify, locate and arrest criminals including fugitives, obtain and execute search / arrest warrants, conduct background investigations on potential Police Officers and civilian employees. Detectives then screen criminal complaints with the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office. In addition, Detectives also process crime scenes, assist the identification officer and also assist patrol officers whenever needed.

Each detective has their own collateral responsibilities as well, to include, but are not limited to, Counter-Terrorism, Megan's Law, Bias Crimes, Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Investigations, Burglary Task Force, Sex Assault Task Force and Gangs/ Drugs and Guns.

Our counter-terrorism detective collects and shares information on suspicious activity related to bomb threats, threats to religious facilities, businesses, schools, unattended parcels, storage facilities, and chemical facilities with our Somerset County Prosecutor's Office liaison to the New Jersey Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), The New Jersey State Police Regional Operation Intelligence Center (ROIC) and the Office of Homeland Security.

Our bias crimes detective is tasked with reviewing all reports of crimes committed based on the victim's creed, ethnicity, race, religion or sexual orientation and then submitting those reports to



our Somerset County Prosecutor's Office liaison. There were ten (10) Bias incidents reported and investigated in 2024.

Our Megan's Law detectives are tasked with overseeing new and current sex offenders that reside or work within our township, as well as making periodic notifications when required depending on the tier classification. There are currently fifteen (15) registered sex offenders (Megan's Law) living within the Township. Eleven (11) of these offenders must re-register with the police department once a year, while four (4) must check in every three months.

The ABC detective is responsible for determining whether our applicants for liquor licenses have disclosed the sources of all funds used to purchase the license, the financing associated with any corporate held licenses, background investigations on the establishment's employees, and compliance with our township ordinance(s). In 2024, three (3) of the Township's forty (40) liquor licenses were transferred, requiring full investigations on all parties involved. There are five (5) licenses in an inactive status and zero (0) licenses are being held pending sale and transfer.

The Burglary Task Force Detective is responsible with sharing information about burglaries to residences and businesses with several other jurisdictions. By sharing this information the Task Force can develop leads based on trends or evidence from other jurisdictions. The detective plans and attends meetings and has a large network of detectives sharing information to develop suspects and potential target areas.

#### **Goals for 2025-**

- To increase undercover operations for the purpose of suppressing criminal activities
- To ensure every detective is trained in Interview & Interrogation, Crime Scene Processing, and Photography
- To grow the Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) program in the town to assist in criminal investigations

The following are some high-profile cases the CIB investigated during 2024:

**January-** On 1/22/24, TD Bank contacted police and reported a suspicious transaction was taking place at their branch located on Union Ave in Bridgewater. Officers arrived on scene and located the suspect, Joel Huggins (8/19/64), of Philadelphia, PA. Officers confirmed with staff that Huggins attempted to cash a check for \$2369 that appeared to have been issued by a company out of Freehold, NJ. Bank staff additionally confirmed the check was fraudulent. Huggins was taken into custody and brought to police headquarters where he provided detectives with a post-Miranda statement. Huggins admitted to attempting to cash the check but claimed that he believed it was legitimate. Huggins was charged with 3<sup>rd</sup> degree Forgery and was lodged in the Somerset County Jail.

**February-** On 2/27/24, Commons Mall Security reported that a male subject, later identified as Shakir Cole (7/7/89), was stopping at various stores and using counterfeit currency. Officers and Detectives responded to the mall and located Cole. Cole was ultimately arrested and found to be in possession of counterfeit currency and a fraudulent New Jersey Driver's License, and stolen credit cards. Cole was charged with Forgery 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, Credit Card Fraud 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, and Possession of False Government Documents 4<sup>th</sup> degree. He was lodged in the Somerset County Jail.

**March-** On 3/27/24, parents of a 17-year-old female reported that they located inappropriate sexual messages on their daughters' computer. The 17-year-old victim was interviewed by detectives, and it was determined that Brett Clay (39 years old), the child's field hockey coach, had attempted to solicit nude photographs from the juvenile and engaged in sexual conversation with her. Clay was ultimately arrested and charged with Endangering the Welfare of a Minor. Clay was lodged in the Somerset County Jail pending court.

**April-** On 4/13/24 Officers responded to TGI Fridays to investigate a report of a fight between two individuals. During the course of the fight, it was reported that a firearm fell from the waistband of Thomas Carter (7/18/91). Detectives interviewed the witnesses, the victim, and defendant. The firearm was determined to be an Airsoft gun, which was designed to appear as a real firearm. Carter was charged with Possession of an Imitation Firearm 4<sup>th</sup> degree and lodged in jail.

**May-** On 5/23/24, Officers responded to Target to investigate a report of a male subject who was exposing himself and masturbating in front of a customer in an aisle of the store. Detectives responded to the scene and began their investigation. Using the vehicle description and multiple investigative resources, Detectives from Bridgewater Police and Hillsborough Police were able to identify a suspect. They confirmed their suspicion through forensic evidence. On 12/13/24, Detectives arrested Pradeesh Bastian (10/23/75) from Belle Mead, NJ.

**June-** On 6/22/24, an actor later identified as Steven LeBeau (12/25/95), stole a motor vehicle in Greenbrook, NJ. LeBeau drove the stolen vehicle to 5302 French Drive, where he attempted to gain entry to that residence and the vehicle in front of that residence. LeBeau was located leaving the area in the stolen vehicle but fled when officers attempted to pull him over. LeBeau then traveled to 480 Vicki Drive where he entered the residence and stole vehicle keys and other property. He proceeded to steal the victim's Ford F-150 from that residence. LeBeau traveled to 229 Windmill Court, where he gained entry to that residence, but was scared off by the occupants. He fled in the stolen pickup truck from Vicki Drive. Officers and Detectives throughout Somerset County worked together and coordinated their efforts in locating LeBeau. He was eventually located by Bedminster Police after committing additional crimes in Bedminster. LeBeau was arrested and turned over to Bridgewater Police. He was charged



multiple counts of burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft. He was ultimately lodged in the Somerset County Jail.

**July-** On 7/19/24, Officers responded to the Al Falah Center to investigate a report of bias graffiti. A suspect vehicle was identified. On 7/22/24, detectives identified a suspect of Jullian Dale (10/7/94) of Somerville, NJ. He was promptly arrested and provided a post-Miranda statement, admitting to his crimes. Dale was charged with 4<sup>th</sup> degree Bias Intimidation and Disorderly Persons Criminal Mischief. He was lodged in the Somerset County Jail pending court.

**August-** On 8/1/24, several female shoppers at Target reported that an unknown adult male was masturbating in the aisles of the store, in their field of vision. Detectives responded to the scene to investigate. Using images from the surveillance footage Detective Van Doren was able to quickly identify the suspect as Jason Banks (12/13/02) of East Orange, NJ. Upon contacting Banks, he turned himself in and provided a post-Miranda confession. He was charged with 4<sup>th</sup> degree Lewdness and was lodged in the Somerset County Jail.

**September-** Bridgewater School Resource Officers are investigating two cases where BRHS students were found in possession of child sexual abuse materials on their assigned google drive accounts accessed through their school issued laptops. Charges are pending forensic examinations.

**October-** On 10/5/24, Robert Foederl (7/26/97) responded to Bridgewater Headquarters to report that his identity had been stolen and used to purchase a vehicle. It was learned that Foederl's identity had been used to purchase a second vehicle. Foederl claimed that he did not purchase or authorize the purchase of either vehicle. An extensive investigation revealed that Foederl had purchased two vehicles for a female acquaintance and when the relationship soured, he falsely reported one of the purchases as fraud. Foederl was arrested and charged with two counts of filing a false police report. He was released on a summons.

**November-** On 11/30/24, a 21-year-old victim reported that he was robbed in the parking lot of Macy's. The victim stated that an acquaintance, known to him as Chase, asked him to hang out. The victim works at JD Sports Finish Line in the mall. Chase messaged the victim on Instagram, asking him to use his employee discount at JD Sports Finish Line to make purchases for him with a plan to meet up after work outside Macy's. When the victim finished his shift, walked to the parking lot outside Macy's where three individuals wearing masks assaulted him and took the bag of merchandise valued at \$261. Detectives interviewed the victim and have identified three suspects. This case is still being investigated.

**December-** On 12/2/24, officers responded to multiple burglaries at the Squires Corner Shopping center. Two suspects are seen on video prying open the doors. Emmanuel Tolentino (2/27/99) was developed as a suspect through License Plate Readers and Cell Tower dumps. He was arrested on 12/18/24. Suspect #2 remains unknown.



## **Youth Services Bureau**

The Youth Services Bureau (YSB) consisted of two (2) officers; Anthony Milito and Brian Eitner to start the year 2024. In December of this year, Officer Akins Jr. joined the Youth Services Bureau to replace Officer Milito as he had been assigned to the Criminal Investigations Bureau. Officer Eitner was assigned to the Middle School and Officer Milito was assigned to the High School at the start of the 2024/2025 school year. The Youth Services Officers report directly to the Detective Sergeant in charge of the Criminal Investigations Bureau. These officers are commonly referred to as School Resource Officers (SRO). The Youth Services Bureau's main objective is to ensure a safe learning environment for both students and teachers. Secondary responsibilities are to interact with students, school administrators, school staff, conduct investigations, educate students through presentations and address problems as they occur. School Resource Officers conduct criminal investigations involving juveniles, as well as investigating missing/runaway juveniles. They also conduct background investigations and assist members of the Criminal Investigations Bureau and the Patrol Division when school is not in session.

The Youth Services Officers have additional responsibilities as liaisons to the Bridgewater-Raritan Youth Services Commission, the Municipal Alliance, and the Somerset County Juvenile Officer's Association. The Youth Services Commission aids "at-risk" youth as well as supporting various events and groups for juveniles. The Municipal Alliance focuses on helping to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol in youth through presentations and various informational platforms. The Somerset County Juvenile Officer's Association hosts meetings throughout the year in an effort for all juvenile officers throughout the county to collaborate and share information.

Mr. Voorhees, who has been the Bridgewater-Raritan Board of Education School Security Director since 2022 has collaborated on multiple school security, student, and traffic safety issues. Such as student drop off/pick up traffic plans, information sharing/communications, and school investigations. Mr. Voorhees assumed the role as the liaison between the Bridgewater Raritan High School administration and the School Resource Officers, creating a better communication and information sharing process.

From January to June 2024, Officer Eitner and Milito continued to work with the high school administration and students to ensure a safe and secure learning environment. The School Resource Officers participated in multiple classroom presentations throughout the year speaking on topics ranging from traffic law, Title 2C, juvenile law, and general questions from the student. Although the dynamic of the security and student social structure changed, the officers were able to maintain a safe and secure environment while sustaining their counseling and mentorship role for the students.



From September to December 2024, Officer Eitner was assigned to the Middle School. Officer Eitner worked with the Middle School administration and students to ensure a safe and secure learning environment. Officer Eitner's main goal while assigned to the Middle School was to establish and build a positive relationship with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students that could be fostered as they continue to high school.

The School Resource Officers also participated in multiple community related events such as boy/girl scout troop visits, Halloween events, and National Night Out. For the 2024 National Night Out, Officer Akins Jr. made identification cards for children who attended National Night Out using the Identification Card printer which was purchased by YSB in 2023. During the event Officer Akins Jr. produced over 100 "Juvenile Detective" ID badges and personalized them for all requesting residents

Officer Akins Jr. participated in the Somerset County Police Institute Youth Police Week in July 2024 as an instructor and mentor to approximately 25 youth from Somerset County.

The Somerset County Prosecutor's Office (SCPO) continues their emphasis on juvenile offenders being offered the opportunity to participate in the Station House Adjustment Program. This program enables Youth Services to assign juveniles to community services in lieu of filing a formal complaint for certain offenses and non-violent crimes. The community-based agency, Middle Earth, located on North Bridge Street in Bridgewater, oversees the community service program. This program is offered to juveniles who reside in Somerset County. There have been ten (10) juveniles enrolled in the Station House Adjustment Program during 2024.

The New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice also made changes to the reporting system. In addition to Station House Adjustments, the state now requires police departments to record all Curbside Warnings. Both officers formulated a method through Q.E.D. (Computer Automated Dispatch) software which facilitated the tracking of each warning. There have been twenty-one (21) juveniles who received a warning in lieu of a Stationhouse Adjustment or a criminal consequence.

At the beginning of 2023 the school resource officers established a unit goal to maintain a healthy relationship between the school resource officers and the students of the Bridgewater-Raritan High School, as well as establish an effective relationship with the newly appointed director of security and his staff. As of 2024 we have continued to build on those relationships and have maintained a good working relationship.

Throughout the course of the year, we focused on that goal and were able to obtain results from our efforts. Together we engaged with the students of Bridgewater-Raritan High school by participating in an advisory period. We conducted social interviews with students throughout the school, with the focus on learning how they exhibited self-respect and respect for authority (being police or school administration). We actively participated in spirit week and events operated by the students to show our support. We were present in the hallways and walkways



daily to converse with the students and assist when needed. When time permits, the School Resource Officers engage in physical education activities on a weekly basis. Through those engagements we created a relationship with the student body that is conducive to maintaining a safe environment.

With the increasing presence and responding to societal awareness of school violence throughout the country, the Youth Services Bureau has continued to put a significant emphasis on school security and student relations in 2024. Establishing a trusting relationship with the students has led to multiple investigations in which the reports and much of the evidence originated from students who felt comfortable approaching police regarding a security issue. The bond created with the students throughout the year has created not only trust, but an apparent respect for authority and security. During this school year, starting in September 2024, there has been a continued difference in overall student behavior and willingness to report information. There has also been a noticeable decrease in the request for School Resource Officers by school administration for delinquent issues.

Our goals set for 2024 in the previous year included also attending more training specific to school safety, drug trends, etc. In 2024, Officer Akins Jr. attended a Law Enforcement Against Drug (L.E.A.D) course in which he became certified instructor and School Resource Officer (SRO) Training. Officer Eitner attended a Seminar on Behavioral Threat Assessment and School Security presented by the U.S. Secret Service, and Standard Reunification Method (SRM) Training Seminar and Exercise.

As these past achievements reflect a positive trend in the Youth Service's Bureaus effectiveness within the district and community, it is important we continue to focus on resetting our ambitions moving forward. As we begin a new year, this unit will establish new standards that will not only improve our capabilities but influence the administration that we work so closely with.

#### Youth Services Goals for 2025:

- Continue to attend more training specifically on school safety, current drug trends, technology and the internet, driver's education and community outreach.
- Maintain our position within the BRHS Behavioral Threat Assessment Team and ensure the school administration recognizes the position as per policy.
- Create more opportunities for school security/active shooter training scenarios in collaboration with district security and the entire department.
- Develop a presentation on School Resource Officers position and function that would be presented to 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders. i.e.. Internet safety, misuse of social media and the consequences

- Opportunity to have Officer rifles available inside the building (i.e., Office firearm's safe)
- Continue to maintain a close working relationship with the school administration, staff, and students

## **Traffic Safety Bureau**

During the year 2024, the Bridgewater Township Police Department's Traffic Safety Bureau provided traffic safety services to township residents, businesses and all who traveled the roads in Bridgewater Township. The primary function of the Traffic Safety Bureau was and continues to be the investigation of serious and fatal motor vehicle crashes, along with the enforcement of traffic laws within the township. The Traffic Safety Bureau is responsible for: traffic safety presentations, hazardous busing, school crossing guards, traffic surveys, crash data collection, tow wrecker management, junk titles and traffic enforcement related training.

The Traffic Safety Bureau was comprised of the following personnel during 2024:

Sergeant Dan Hennessey  
Officer Joseph Greco  
Officer Steven Black  
Officer Cole Taggart

The Traffic Safety Bureau did not have a fatal motor vehicle crash in 2024.

The Traffic Safety Bureau investigated numerous serious motor-vehicle crashes. Below are some of the noteworthy investigations conducted in 2024.

**January 6<sup>th</sup>**, TSU responded to 724 US Highway 202 for a report of a motor vehicle crash involving a pedestrian. During our investigation, we determined the following: Vehicle 1 was traveling west through the Wegmans parking lot aisle #2. V1 stopped at the stop sign at the end of the aisle, turned left, traveling south directly in front of the Wegmans front entrance. V1 then drove through a posted stop sign, without stopping, and struck a pedestrian who was walking east across the roadway. Utilizing witness statements and CCTV footage, the pedestrian is believed to have been in the a-pillar blind spot of V1 as she was struck. The pedestrian was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital for a head injury.

**March 24<sup>th</sup>**, TSU investigated a single motor vehicle crash that occurred on Vosseller Avenue near the intersection of Van Pelt Court. The crash involved a 2020 Acura TLX, operated by Endy Grandos-Bustos (age 21 of Warren NJ), who was traveling north on Vosseller Avenue. Grandos-Bustos' vehicle drove off the roadway to the right, struck multiple fixed objects, and rolled over twice. Grandos-Bustos was the only occupant in the vehicle and was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital to be treated for his serious injuries.

**April 17<sup>th</sup>**, TSU responded to Brown Road at Papen Road for the report of a serious right angle motor vehicle crash, with a vehicle off the road. During our investigation, we determined the following: Vehicle 1 was traveling west on Papen Road; Vehicle 2 was traveling north on Brown Road. V1 drove west; through a posted stop sign without stopping, into the intersection with



Brown Road, directly in front of V2 resulting in a right-angle crash. Post impact, V1 struck the curb on the west side of Brown Road, running off the roadway onto the front lawn of 1051 Brown Road where the vehicle came to rest. V2 rotated approximately 90 degrees clockwise, struck the curb on the east side of Brown Road and ran off the roadway onto the sidewalk where the vehicle came to rest. Both operators of V1 and V2 were transported to Robert Wood Johnson Somerset and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital with injuries.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>**, TSU investigated a motor vehicle crash that occurred on US Highway 202/206 near the intersection of Mountainview Avenue. The crash involved a 2023 Nissan Rouge, operated by Susan Weideli (age 63 of Bridgewater NJ), and a 2018 Ford Escape, operated by Nicole Zebleckas (age 25 of Bridgewater NJ). Our investigation revealed that Zebleckas failed to yield the right to Weideli and caused the crash. The impact caused Zebleckas's vehicle to overturn and caused all parties involved to be transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital to be treated for their injuries.

**June 24<sup>th</sup>**, TSU investigated a motor vehicle crash on US Highway 22 near Grove Street. A 2012 Harley Davidson Street Glide, operated by David Allen, was traveling east on Route 22 attempting to turn right onto Grove Street. Allen took the turn at an unsafe speed and dumped his motorcycle on the highway, which eventually slid and struck a 2024 Land Rover, operated by Jake Sempervive. As a result of the crash, Allen sustained serious head trauma and was transported to RWJ New Brunswick.

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>**, TSU investigated a motor vehicle crash that occurred on Finderne Avenue at the intersection of Central Avenue. The crash involved a 2017 Mazda (3), operated by Edward Carbonaro (age 30 of Bridgewater NJ), and a 2012 Honda Pilot, operated by Marta Castillo De Rivera (age 43 of Plainfield NJ). Carbonaro was traveling north in the left lane of Finderne Avenue. Rivera was traveling south in the left lane of Finderne Avenue. Carbonaro's vehicle crossed over the double yellow painted lane marker, entered Rivera's lane of travel and caused a head-on crash. TSU's investigation revealed that Carbonaro was driving while intoxicated and was issued summons' for driving while intoxicated, Reckless driving, and unsafe lane change.

**August 25<sup>th</sup>**, TSU investigated a motor vehicle crash on Washington Valley Rd. near Vosseller Avenue. A 2012 Toyota Venza, operated by Malcolm Pryce who had a suspended license at the time, was traveling east on Washington Valley Road. Pryce attempted to brake quickly to make a turn into a driveway on Washington Valley Road. While doing so, a group of pedal cyclists behind him were unable to stop in time. Two (2) of the cyclists subsequently struck the rear of his vehicle at a high rate-of-speed. Both cyclists were transported to RWJ New Brunswick for concussions and other possibly serious injuries.

**December 6<sup>th</sup>**, TSU responded to US Highway 22 East at Adamsville Road for the report of a serious motor vehicle crash with an overturned vehicle off the road. During our investigation, we determined the following: Vehicle 1 was traveling east on US Highway 22 in the left lane of

travel; Vehicle 2 was stopped at the stop sign on Adamsville Road, waiting to merge onto US Highway 22 East. V2 merged onto US Highway 22 East in the right lane of travel and then changed three traffic lanes in an attempt to enter (the exit) driveway of the Bridgewater Diner (1244 US Highway 22). V2 was positioned at an approximate 45-degree angle, halfway over the white dotted lane lines, for the left lane and center lane of the highway when she was struck by V1 who was traveling east in the left lane of the highway. Post impact, V2 rotated 180 degrees clockwise and came to rest on the left shoulder of the highway. Post impact V1 ran off the left side of the roadway and struck/sheared a utility pole in half. After striking and shearing the utility pole, the pole acted as a tripping mechanism causing V1 to vault and endwise flip, coming to rest on its roof, on top of three parked vehicles in the Bridgewater Diner parking lot. The operator of V1 was transported to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital with serious injuries.

In 2024 The Traffic Safety Bureau conducted Six hundred-thirty-eight (638) motor-vehicle traffic stops and investigated four hundred and four (404) motor vehicle crashes. One hundred-fifty-one (151) directed patrols were conducted targeting roadways with various traffic issues and citizen complaints.

During 2024, Sergeant Hennessey, and Officers Greco, Taggart, and Black continued their education primarily through attending classes hosted at County Police Academies and in-service training. They also served on the Somerset County Collision and Reconstruction Team where they assisted in the investigations of serious and fatal motor vehicle crashes throughout Somerset County.

Officer Taggart is a certified car seat technician. Township residents and individuals who work in Bridgewater can contact the police department and schedule an appointment with these officers to have their child seat(s) inspected to ensure proper installation. In 2024, Off. Taggart inspected and installed 14 car seats at police headquarters.

During 2024, utility and roadway improvement projects occurred throughout Bridgewater Township. Bureau personnel regularly attended construction meetings and consulted with the Bridgewater Engineering Department to ensure safe work zones and properly installed detour routes.

In 2024, TSU rolled out the Blue Envelope Program which is geared towards fostering inclusivity and promoting safer interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with autism spectrum disorder.



2024 Goals for the Bridgewater Traffic Safety Bureau were as follows:

1. Fill the vacant TSU position and bring the total number of officers in the unit to four (4).
2. Hire two (2) additional crossing guards or sub-contract the work to an outside vendor.
3. Continue efforts to increase DWI enforcement.
4. Continue to address speeding complaints utilizing our radar recorders, radar signs, targeted enforcement and directed patrol.

The Traffic Safety Bureau met most of the goals set for 2024. Speeding complaints will always be an issue in a town the size of Bridgewater. We continue to address speeding complaints by first conducting a speed survey utilizing one of our radar recorders or speed signs to determine whether the complaint is valid or simply a perception problem. If a speeding issue is determined to exist on a particular road, the Traffic Safety Bureau, as in years past, will conduct targeted enforcement of said road with periodic follow up. We were able to fill our crossing guard vacancy with new hires. The fourth TSU position remained unfilled throughout 2024.

The Traffic Safety Bureau has continued to keep our citizens informed of road closures and detours, through the use of Nixle, social media, and the department's two message boards. The message boards have been used to advise motorists of community events and construction projects. This will continue in 2025.

DWI enforcement was conducted throughout the year, complimented by several County grant initiatives. Seventy-seven drunk driving arrests were made in 2024 compared to Sixty-seven drunk driving arrests in 2023.

The Traffic Safety Bureau received several complaints of vehicles passing stopped school buses throughout the year and addressed those complaints by conducting targeted enforcement.

2025 Goals for the Bridgewater Traffic Safety Bureau are as follows:

1. Continue efforts to increase DWI enforcement.
2. Continue to address speeding complaints utilizing our radar recorders, radar signs, targeted enforcement and directed patrol.
3. Make school bus stops safer by increasing efforts to enforce vehicles passing stopped school buses.
4. Increase MV enforcement on state highways in an effort to decrease overall roadway speed and increase safety.

## **TECHNICAL SUPPORT BUREAU**

The Technical Support Bureau (TSB) is responsible for the planning, procurement, installation, and maintenance of the department's information technology (IT) resources. The department's IT infrastructure is currently composed of:

- Law Enforcement Records Management (LERMS) – Queues Enforth Development, Inc. (QED)
- QED Mobile Client – Queues Enforth Development, Inc. (QED)
- New Jersey State National Crime Information Center 2000 interface
- Windows Server 2016 – Microsoft
- Worry-Free Business Security Antivirus – Trend Micro
- WatchGuard Firewall – WatchGuard
- Windows 10 Professional – Microsoft
- Definity Telephone System and Voicemail - Avaya
- Digital Voice Logger – Eventide
- Motorola Mobile Video Recorders (MVRs) and Body Worn Cameras (BWC)
- Five Servers – Physical and Virtual (Linux and Microsoft operating systems).
- Over 55 desktop/laptop pc clients (MS Windows OS).
- 30 in-car Mobile Data Terminals (MS Windows OS, QED Mobile client)
- 85 Body-Worn Cameras

One full-time civilian IT Coordinator and one sworn officer staff the Technical Support Bureau. In 2024 the Bureau's primary focus was to support the Motorola BWC and MVR system. With the full-time sworn officer, the TSB was able to operate more efficiently. Equipment uptime was much higher due to the increased oversight provided by additional staffing. The officer was able to work effectively with many outside agencies, vendors, and the Department of Public Works to ensure the police department had the tools to function effectively.

In 2024, the Motorola body-worn cameras were due for a model refresh. The department-wide BWC refresh deployment will take place in early 2025. The BWC and MVRs were originally deployed in March 2022. The BWC refresh will be completed by the first quarter 2025.

The QED LERMS system continues to be the repository of computerized data related to the department's daily functions. LERMS contains digital records of all department enforcement and investigative activities and digital images of all original police reports. This information is supplied to clients as requested, used for crime analysis, and the preparation of the monthly Uniform Crime Report (UCR) as required by State and Federal regulations and Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests.

Our migration to a new email system (Microsoft 365) was completed in the first half of 2024. We also moved our mail to the [bridgewater.nj.gov](mailto:bridgewater.nj.gov) domain.

### **2025 Goals**

- Assess the technology equipment needs of the department moving forward
- Assess network infrastructure needs/upgrades
- Plan for the upgrade of site security/surveillance/access control



- Plan for the upgrade of the telephone system
- Begin the process of evaluating BWC systems in anticipation of the end of contract with Motorola in 2026. Evaluate systems and pricing to get the best product and value for the township.

## **Records Bureau**

The Records Bureau is responsible for processing and filing police reports, processing firearms and solicitors permit applications, distributing police reports to the appropriate requesting agencies and the public, and preparing case files. The Records Bureau is also responsible for maintaining archives and entering data into the computer system.

As of **December 31, 2024**, the Records Bureau processed the following:

Case Files	2152
Discovery Requests	1437
OPRA Requests	690
Background Checks	703
Insurance Requests	596
Total Fees Collected	\$77,152

In 2024, the Records Bureau experienced higher numbers in discovery, OPRA and insurance requests. Discovery requested increased from one thousand twenty-eight (1028) in 2023 to fourteen hundred thirty-seven (1437) in 2024. That is an increase of thirty-nine percent (39.5%).

Open Public Records Act (OPRA) applications are assigned through the NextRequest system by the Township Clerk's Office. In the Police Department the Records Bureau reviews and fulfills these requests. Requests can be extensive and require from one to hundreds of separate reports. OPRA requests continued to increase. We received five hundred sixty-eight (568) OPRA requests in 2023 and six hundred ninety (690) requests in 2024. This is an increase of twenty-two percent (22%) over 2023. The trend of increased OPRA requests is continuing.

Background checks and Insurance requests decreased slightly from previous years. Background checks include Letters of Good Conduct, DCPD requests, and requests from other law enforcement agencies about employee applications. Background checks requests have decreased approximately eleven percent (11%) from 2023 to 2024. Insurance requests include insurance agencies and law firm requests for accident reports. These requests can be time consuming to prepare.

In 2024 the Records Bureau had a staff of nine civilian personnel. The team was comprised of three full-time Records Clerks, one part-time Records Clerk, one Criminal Investigative Clerk, one Licensing Coordinator, one BWC Redaction Clerk, and one IT Coordinator. Additionally, the Operations Manager/Records Supervisor is responsible for the accreditation process for the Bridgewater Police Department.



The Records Bureau has managed court discovery duties since 2010. This responsibility includes processing all Bridgewater Police Department, NJ State Police and Sheriff's Department discovery requests and assisting the Bridgewater Municipal Court Prosecutor with court duties on all scheduled court days. Discovery increased from one thousand twenty-eight (1028) in 2023 to fourteen hundred thirty-seven (1437) in 2024. Discovery has increased from seven hundred eight (708) in 2022 to fourteen hundred thirty-seven (1437) in 2024. That is more than double in a 3-year period.

The decriminalization of marijuana and the continued widespread use of expedited expungements have led to an unprecedented increase in expungements. The New Jersey Supreme Court ordered over five hundred Bridgewater marijuana arrests expunged. From 2011 to 2019, we averaged forty-nine expungements per year. In 2023 we processed approximately six hundred (600) expungements. In 2024, we received two hundred twenty-one (221) requests for expungements. In 2023 we had three personnel working on the expungements. In 2024 we had one employee working on expungements.

In 2024 all personnel were cross trained in at least one other Records position. Cross training for all Records job tasks is eighty-five percent (85%) completed. False alarm billing and municipal discovery have not been completely cross trained yet.

#### 2025 Goals

- Complete cross training by the end of the first quarter of 2025.
- Move to electronic platforms for all applicable processes and operations (discovery, OPRA, MVC reports)
- Update and implement a comprehensive and sustainable records purging program that aligns with the NJ Records Retention Schedule.

## LICENSING BUREAU

State statutes and local ordinances make the police department responsible for issuing certain licenses and permits. The Licensing Bureau handles that function. Licensing personnel help an applicant through the required pre-issuance process. The Licensing Bureau then preforms an investigation and gathers necessary documentation. A report is generated and submitted to the Chief of Police to grant or deny the permit or license.

2024 was the fifth full year using the New Jersey State Police, Firearms Application & Registration System, or "FARS" as it is known. The fully online, paperless system has streamlined the firearms licensing process. It has also eliminated the burden of storing physical documents, which are now stored electronically in FARS system. During 2024 we processed permits with little to no backlog generated by the Licensing Bureau.

2024 was the first full year of using the New Jersey State Police online process system to complete Concealed Carry Permits. The fully online, paperless system has streamlined the carry permit process. It has eliminated the burden of sending applications to Somerset County Superior Court to be completed by the Court Judge. The online system along with changes in the state statutes now has authorized the Chief of Police to finalize the Concealed Carry Permits.

In 2024 the Licensing Bureau saw a steady increase in permit application with an increase in Carry Permits over 2023. The Bureau completed 1,335 permits in 2024 with 141 of those Concealed Carry Permits.

### 2024 Firearms Permit numbers:

645	Firearms Application filed	619 approved for 1,335 permits issued
142	Concealed Carry application filed for	141 permits issued
3	Firearms Applications Denied	
0	Concealed Carry Application Denied.	
34	Firearms Application withdrawn	
33	Firearms Application carried over	
3	Concealed Carry Permits carried over	

### 2024 Solicitor/Peddler Permit numbers:

14	Permits approved for the year.
12	Permits carried over
3	Permits Withdrawn
0	Permits Denied

### 2025 Goals:

To keep informed with the continuously changing statutes regarding concealed carry permits.

To evaluate the possible need for an additional licensing clerk with the continues increase in demand for permits.



## TRAINING

Lieutenants Ochs oversaw training of new police recruits/probationary officers and Lieutenant Dolinski was in charge of the other aspects of Professional Development which included state mandated training, police licensing and in-service training, both class assignments and in-house.

Training a police officer is divided into four phases. Those phases are Basic Police Recruit Training, Performance Objective Standardized Training (POST), Field Training, and In-Service Training. A review of each phase in 2024 is listed below.

### Basic Police Recruit Training

All officers hired by the Bridgewater Police Department must receive their PTC (Police Training Commission) certification from a police academy. The basic recruit academy training course is approximately six (6) months in duration. Officers who transfer from other agencies within the state of New Jersey are not required to attend the full police academy course. Instead, they are required to fulfill the agencies' post training requirements. In 2024, the Bridgewater Police Department hired six (6) police officers. All these officers were previously employed and certified by other New Jersey police departments and therefore did not attend any police academy basic recruit training. These new officers transitioned into the POST training section upon being sworn in as Bridgewater Township Probationary Police Officers.

### POST Training

All new officers must attend POST training. This training consists of mandatory state guideline training in addition to reviewing and understanding our agencies policies, procedures, rules and regulations. New officers do not proceed into the Field Training Officer program until they have successfully completed their POST training requirements.

### Field Training Program

There are five phases to the Field Training Program. The phases evaluate the new officer during a 15-week duration. During this time the probationary officer is assigned to a Field Training Officer (FTO). He or she is constantly evaluated during this period to make sure the new officer fulfills the state and townships requirements before becoming a permanent full-time sworn officer. After completion of the Field Training Program, the Chief of Police will review the probationary officer's progress and release him/her from the probationary status and to full-time officer status if they have fulfilled all their requirements.

### In-Service Training

Department personnel attended approximately 93 mandatory certification, re-certification, and in-service courses. Our department provides mandated annual training to all members as prescribed by the State Attorney General's Office as well as the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office.

The police department continued its proactive approach by assigning training in the incident command system, active shooter response, unarmed defense, and numerous other specialized investigative classes. Certifications were maintained/obtained in the following areas: Mandatory Agency Training (MATS), Community-Law Enforcement Affirmative Relations Training (CLEAR), Alcotest 7110 MK IIIC, Alcotest 9510 conversion, Taser and Less Lethal Weapons. The training was offered by federal, state, county, and local agencies as well as given in-house by officers trained as instructors.

The Professional Development Bureau successfully oversaw the renewal of 1/3 of our agency's officers' police licenses (28 officers), a new requirement for 2024.

### Goals for 2025

- 1) Complete all mandatory training as prescribed by State and County laws and guidelines.
- 2) Successfully implement eight department-wide standardized training sessions throughout the year.
- 3) Maintain all the training to NJSACOP Accreditation Standards.
- 4) Contract Northern Red to train the Bridgewater Township Firearms Instructors Close Quarters Battle and their ONE one-man response course for any officers that have not yet had it.
- 5) Renew the police licenses of the members of the agency who expire this year (27 officers).



## PART II

# COLLATERAL DUTIES

## **Awards**

During 2024, Lieutenant Fredrick Brittain and Lieutenant Todd Mele oversaw awards requests by assigning an awards committee for review and approval.

In 2024 the men and women of the Bridgewater Police Department conducted themselves in a professional and compassionate manner resulting in us honoring several officers for their performances with the following awards throughout the year. We also had the pleasure of recognizing two civilians for their efforts in assisting our officers resulting in a CPR / Defibrillator save.

### **CPR / Defibrillator Save**

Ofc. Christopher Rini x 2  
Ofc. Timothy Weiss  
Ofc. Bryce Forke  
Ofc. John Conroy

### **Unit Citation**

Lt. James Edwards  
Sgt. Patrick Knapp  
Sgt. Michael Ziarnowski  
Det. Tyran Barnett  
Ofc. Joshua Sherman  
Ofc. Ryan Struck  
Ofc. Brian Schbert

### **Civilian Award – 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree**

Pasquale Iannuzah  
Rebecca Metzger



## **Domestic Violence Annual Report 2024**

In 2024, based on domestic violence response statistics derived from call history files, there were 368 domestic violence related calls for service, of which 170 were completed investigations.

In 2023, there were 244 domestic violence-related calls for service, of which 120 were completed investigations.

In 2022, there were 289 domestic violence related calls for service, of which 149 were completed investigations.

### Domestic Violence Liaison Officers:

During 2024, Sergeant Louis Bowers, Officer Anne Alosi, and Officer Kristofer Grimm served as the department's Domestic Violence Liaison Officers. The liaison officers acted as the point of contact with the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office, the office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, the Somerset County Family Court, Safe and Sound of Somerset, and the Bridgewater Township Domestic Violence Response Team. The liaison officers attend Domestic Violence Response Team meetings, Somerset County Family Court Domestic Violence Working Group meetings, and annual domestic violence law update training.

The liaison officers are also responsible for coordinating and instructing the annual state mandated training in domestic violence response to all sworn police personnel. Additionally, the liaison officers frequently serve as the first point of contact for victims of domestic violence who call or respond to the police department for advice or assistance.

## **BURGLAR ALARMS**

The Bridgewater Police Department responded to 1,771 calls involving burglar, panic and hold up alarm activations in 2024. This number of responses is in line with last year's number. Generally, these alarms require two officers to be dispatched to the alarm activation. These alarm activations are considered high priority which requires an expedited response until the situation is evaluated by the initial responding officer(s).

In addition to burglar alarms, officers respond to medical alarms, vehicle alarms and fire alarms which include water flow and carbon monoxide alarms. As per township ordinance, all burglar alarms in the township need to be registered and maintained so retrieval of information is possible. While the main QED computer system and software is maintained by Somerset County Communications, all false alarm reporting and alarm registration data is inputted and maintained by the Police Department Alarm Manager. In 2024, 59 township residences and businesses were found to have not registered their burglar alarm systems. Alarm packets were sent out to all these Bridgewater properties asking for alarm registrations to be completed and returned. The rate of return has been 39% by the end of 2024. 55 alarm registrations were inputted into the county QED system during the year. Outdated alarm registrations continue to be found and are deleted from the system and hardcopy information is removed from the alarm registration books.

The QED software creates alarm violations during a calendar year period. Following township ordinance at the fourth false alarm the owner is assessed a \$50 fine, for false alarms five through nine the owner is assessed a \$75 fine per occurrence and for ten plus alarms the violation fine is \$100 per occurrence. All alarm activations are reviewed by the Alarm Manager using the incident notes by the police officer and/or county dispatcher to determine if the activated alarm fits the township ordinance definition of being a false alarm. Violation notices were sent out each quarter of the year. Paid penalties amounted to \$15,840 during the 2024 calendar year.

Alarm systems are for the protection of homeowners and business owners; however, false alarms are a substantial drain on the police department and other township emergency services and need to be closely monitored.



## FIREARMS TRAINING UNIT

The New Jersey Attorney General's Policy on firearms qualifications requires that all sworn law enforcement officers who are authorized to utilize firearms and Conductive Energy Devices (Taser) must demonstrate their proficiency and qualify with each weapon they carry while on and off duty. These requirements pertain to handguns, shotguns, rifles, and the Taser. At the end of each calendar year, the Supervising Firearms Instructor is responsible for the completion and submission of a year-end report through the Chief of Police to the Somerset County Prosecutor. The report contains information pertaining to the number of officers who were qualified, each weapon with which they qualified, a list of how many officers did not qualify, and an explanation of the circumstances of the latter.

In 2024 the Bridgewater Township Police Department complied with all requirements of the New Jersey Attorney General relating to handgun, shotgun, assault rifle, and Taser.

The Firearms Training Unit added one additional instructor after he completed training in the Passaic County Police Academy.

Two firearms instructors were trained as Axon Taser instructors and conducted recertification for our entire agency.

Members of the Firearms Training Unit assisted in conducting training for all members of the agency all year long. This training consisted of weapons handling techniques, high risk MV stops and vehicle interdiction, close quarter battle and active shooter response. We conducted extensive force-on-force training utilizing Simmunitions. The average Bridgewater Police Officer fired approximately 1500 rounds of live ammunition on the firearms training range throughout 2024, a number far higher than the state average by a large margin.

Current and future patrol sergeants were certified by the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office on both the eXact Impact 40mm sponge round and the Pepperball launcher giving the agency two extended range less lethal options. These weapons were then placed into service and were available for use daily if needed.

The firearms policy went through a major update and less lethal weaponry was added to the Conducted Energy Device Policy.

All members of the Firearms Training Unit attended a three-day course on small unit tactics taught by the training cadre of Northern Red at Camp Cromwell. These advanced active shooter and violent incident response tactics were taught to all members of the agency at subsequent training days.

In regard to equipment, more Universal Training Munitions equipment and ammunition was purchased to improve our ability to conduct realistic simulation training. A rifle-rated ballistic

shield was purchased and nor is carried daily on the road should it be needed to respond to an emergency. The goal of assigning individual rifles to all operators was finally achieved increasing both effectiveness and accountability. Lastly, 10 Jersey Claw breaching tools were purchased and after training on breaching was conducted for a large group of officers, the breaching tools were deployed on the road.

Lastly, the movement away from the semi-automatic Benelli M2 shotgun was largely completed, and its place was taken by the more intuitive to operate Benelli Supernova pump shotgun. Training of users was conducted and will be ongoing in 2025.

### **Firearms goals for 2025**

- To train multiple additional Taser operators to fill gaps on the nightshifts.
- To train one or more in-house instructors on our two less lethal launchers and then have them conduct in-house training to recertify all current operators.
- To train multiple additional firearms instructors to replace those who have retired or are moving into different positions.
- Continue to conduct extra range sessions beyond what the state mandates and conduct numerous force-on-force sessions in various UOF topics.
- To send anyone who has not yet been through the Northern Red ONE course through it.
- To host Northern Red for an advanced close quarter battle school for firearms instructors.
- Explore VR as an adjunct to dry fire training while continuing to engage in dry fire sessions to improve agency capability.
- To explore other options for elite training for the Firearms Training Unit.
- To begin the transition to red dot optics on our duty pistols with the first phase being Firearms Training Unit being issued these guns to learn the platform and prepare to teach the rest of the agency their use.



## **Internal Affairs Unit**

The Bridgewater Police Department Internal Affairs Unit is responsible for the receipt, investigation, and resolution of allegations of misconduct by members of the department. Captain Tennant oversees the Internal Affairs Unit. The Bridgewater Police Department is committed to providing law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartially applied. Our Officers are held to the highest standards of conduct in both their personal and professional lives. All citizens will be treated equally with courtesy, consideration and dignity. An Officers' adherence to these standards is the ultimate objective of this agency.

The effectiveness of a law enforcement agency is dependent upon public trust and acceptance of law enforcement authority. A police department must be responsive to the community by providing formal procedures for the processing of complaints from the public regarding individual officer's performance. A complaint may be made in any way (phone, written, oral, etc.) and upon receipt of a complaint the incident is reviewed to determine if an investigation is warranted; if the complaint contains an allegation of misconduct, an internal investigation is initiated. An incident of misconduct or inappropriate behavior may fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Excessive Force
- Improper Arrest
- Improper Entry
- Improper Search
- Differential Treatment
- Demeanor
- Other Rule Violation
- Other Criminal Violation
- Domestic Violence

All Captains and Lieutenants who are assigned the responsibility of an internal affairs investigation act at the behest of and are directly responsible to the Chief of Police. All internal affairs investigations are confidential. The investigator based upon his/her investigation, renders a conclusion of fact, or disposition, for each allegation. Possible dispositions include:

- Exonerated: The alleged incident did occur, but the actions of the officer were justified, legal, and proper.
- Sustained: The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation by a preponderance of the evidence.
- 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: The complainant voluntarily withdraws the complaint.

Upon completion of the investigation, all findings are forwarded to the Chief of Police for further action as necessary. In 2024, a total of eleven (11) allegations of misconduct or inappropriate behavior were reported. Of those complaints, ten (10) were reported by members of the public.



## **Municipal Court**

The Bridgewater Municipal Court maintains the authority to govern violations within its statutory jurisdiction, including disorderly person's offenses, other non-indictable offenses not within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Superior Court, violations of motor vehicle and traffic laws, fish and game and boating laws. The Court is granted by statute the authority to collect penalties for violations of county and municipal ordinances and all other proceedings for which jurisdiction is granted.

The Bridgewater Municipal Court is under the direction of Judge Katherine Howes. Judge Howes is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to address domestic violence issues. The Judge is also available to issue Temporary Restraining Orders in domestic violence matters whenever Superior Court is not in session. The Municipal Court Prosecutor for Bridgewater Township is John Lanza. It is the responsibility of the Prosecutor to review the State's position, determine if proper charges have been filed, all criteria have been met, and present the facts in a proper lawful manner. Scott Mitzner serves as the Public Defender. The Public Defender represents those who qualify for public assistance in defense of their position. Jenni Peterson is the Court Administrator and Rosaura Vasquez serves as the Deputy Court Administrator. The remaining Municipal Court staff consists of Violations Clerks Heather Golev, Kelly Flynn, Sebastian Paiz, and Agustina Paiz. The court uses the Language Line Telephonic Service for any language translations needed during court sessions. The Violations Bureau is open from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM on business days.

The Bridgewater Police Department is responsible for courtroom security when court is held in person. The security detail requires a minimum of three officers when the court is in session. These officers monitor the metal detector, as well as the interior and exterior of the courtroom. The court officers are responsible for searching all persons entering the court, directing those attending the court to proper areas and providing security for the judge and court clerk presiding over the proceedings. Court officers also assist the Prosecutor by arranging the appearance of witness officers. The security details are staffed by on duty personnel or overtime when duty personnel are unavailable. Our officers provided 309 hours of court room security in 2024.

Through a shared services agreement with Somerville Borough, their Municipal Court sessions are held in the Bridgewater Municipal Court Room. Our officers provided 239 hours of court room security in 2024. This court room security is an overtime position which is paid for by the Borough of Somerville.

In addition to Somerville Borough, Raritan Borough court sessions were also held in the Bridgewater Municipal Court Room. This was new in 2024. Our officers provided 63 hours of court room security in 2024. This court room security is an overtime position which is paid for by Raritan Borough.

A review of the Bridgewater Police Municipal Court overtime totals for the last five years are as follows:

Somerville Court	
2020	96 Hours
2021	20 Hours
2022	22 Hours
2023	245.5 Hours
2024	239 Hours

Bridgewater Court	
2020	203 Hours
2021	21.5Hours
2022	34.5 Hours
2023	425.5 Hours
2024	309 Hours

Raritan Court	
2020	***
2021	***
2022	***
2023	***
2024	63



## **PATROL FLEET**

In 2024 the Bridgewater Police Department's marked patrol vehicle fleet consisted of 41 marked patrol vehicles, 31 allotted for patrol duties, 3 allotted for traffic safety, 2 allotted for the Class III school resource officers, and 5 allotted for road jobs (only). The fleet consists of Ford Police Interceptor SUVs and Chevrolet Tahoe's. The SUVs are extremely useful for patrolling in inclement weather, special details and events, as well as providing more room inside the vehicle for equipment. The Chevrolet Tahoe SUVs are utilized by supervisory personnel and are equipped with additional equipment that can be used for command incidents.

Between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024 the entire marked fleet traveled approximately 414,318 total miles. The average number of miles driven per month by patrol vehicles in 2023 was 32,450.

In 2024, the township leased five new Ford Police Interceptor SUVs and two new administration vehicles to be used by supervisory personnel in the administrative division. These vehicles were purchased to replace older vehicles.

The police department is determined to conform to the strong interest of the Town Council and public in maximizing economic, energy (ecological "footprint", fuel consumption, etc.), and efficiency interests in the selection and utilization of its patrol vehicles. In furtherance of these interests the police department has conducted research and inquiries into available equipment that will enable the police department to meet a parallel interest of public and officer safety and still provide high quality service. An adequate vehicle replacement program is vital for the police department to meet its goals and maintain the highest quality of service to the citizens of Bridgewater.

### **2025 Goals**

- Purchase/lease additional marked and unmarked police vehicles to reduce costs associated with maintaining and fixing older police vehicles.
- Continue to research technological and vehicle equipment in an effort to maximize fleet efficiency and performance.

## **Special Events**

### **2024**

The Bridgewater Township Police Department hosts and participates in several special events during the year. Bridgewater's geographical and physical attributes continue to attract non-profit organizations that sponsor various fund raising events; specifically: walk-a-thons, road races, historical ceremonies and annual county sponsored events. The special events we take part in allow the Police Department to work in conjunction with county agencies, private sector businesses, local merchants and citizens fostering a renewed sense of community spirit to Bridgewater Township. Below are the special events we were able to participate in.

### **January**

On January 30<sup>th</sup>, Officers participated in the walk-out retirement ceremony of Lt. Brian Blath and Lt. Kevin Lamey after their 25 years of service to Bridgewater Township.

### **March**

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, Officer Anne Alosi and Officer Anthony DiGraziano participated in Read Across America at Adamsville School, North Branch Reformed Church Preschool where they spent time with students and shared their favorite books.

The officers then visited the New Jersey Eastern Star Rehabilitation & Nursing Home where they spoke to senior residents and patients about ways to protect themselves from common senior scams and identity theft.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, the department launched its Instagram page, starting with a series of posts intended to familiarize citizens with the department's command staff.

### **April**

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, officers attended the Blue Mass at Immaculate Conception Church in Somerville hosted by the Immaculate Conception School.

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Chief Mitzak released the department's new mission statement, "Ensuring justice and harmony through community collaboration and constitutional policing". The new mission statement is a simple but direct reflection on how we proudly operate day to day as a police agency.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Bridgewater Township hosted "Take Your Child to Work Day". Our guests were given a tour of police headquarters and were able to sit inside police vehicles. The children were also shown how to use our radar equipment and were given rides in the "gator" off-road vehicle.



## **May**

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Officer Woodruff and Officer Anne Alosi visited Crème de la Crème School for career day. They spoke with students about a typical day for a police officer on patrol in Bridgewater and how police officers help their communities.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, our officers conducted a security detail for the Hell's Angles Motorcycle Club event held at the American Legion on Old York Road. This event brings in numerous members of Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs. As a precaution, officers are assigned to the area to provide general security to the public and attendees.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Officer Greco and Officer Taggart drove two lucky students from Bradley Gardens who won a raffle to have a police officer drive them to school.

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup>, and June 8<sup>th</sup> the department hosted a women's self defense course which included classroom sessions and hands-on seminars.

## **June**

The 40th annual Special Olympics Torch Run took place on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Our officers escorted the run through our township, providing traffic control and security. Additionally, many of our officers volunteered their time to run in or assist with the event, in an effort to raise money for this worthwhile cause.

## **September**

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, the department participated in Remembrance Day, the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of 9/11.

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, the department participated in the Bridgewater Family Fun Day & Touch a Truck event at the Bridgewater Commons Mall.

## **October**

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, officers gave a Senior Citizen Scam Awareness presentation at the Bridgewater Senior Center.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the department participated in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Members of the public were able to turn in their unwanted, unused prescription medication to police headquarters for disposal.

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, the department hosted National Night Out and Halloween Night at our Township Building. National Night Out is a community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make the neighborhoods safer. Officers participated in giveaways, kid's games and activities, and they handed out food to our residents. Our officers

also handed out Halloween candy, Bridgewater Police souvenirs and provided access to our police vehicles while interacting with the community.

### **December**

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, officers attended the fourth annual Bridgewater Township Christmas tree lighting at the municipal building.

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, our Officers participated in the Heroes & Helpers Program at Target. Target supplied our Officers with gift cards, which were then distributed to children from Bridgewater as well as neighboring towns. The children were then given the opportunity to shop with an officer, who helped them pick something nice for the holiday season.

On December 17<sup>th</sup>, the department rolled out the Blue Envelope Program which is geared towards fostering inclusivity and promoting safer interactions between law enforcement officers and individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

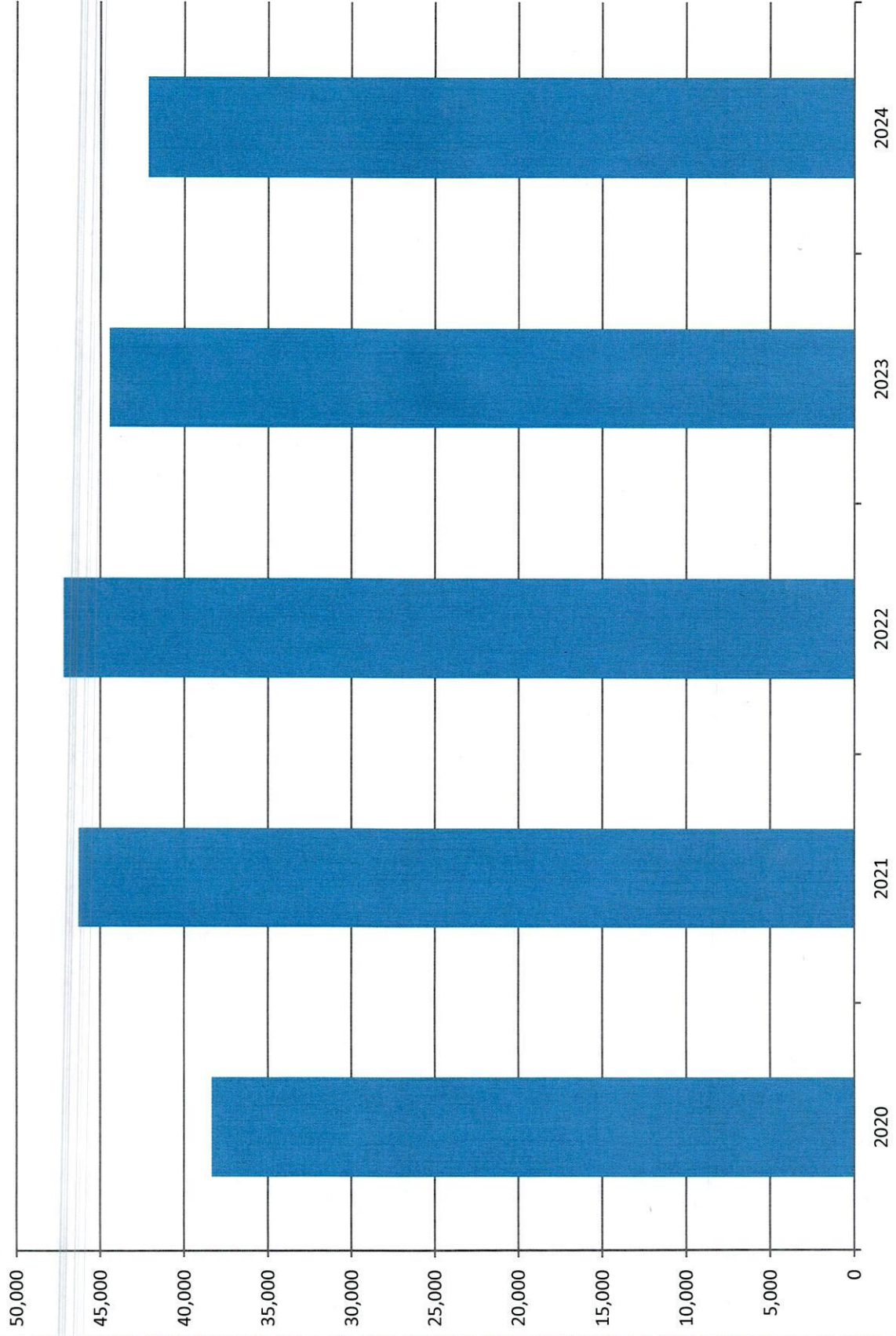
On December 19<sup>th</sup>, our Officers delivered toys to the children of St. Peters Hospital and the Children's Specialized Hospital of New Brunswick.



## PART III

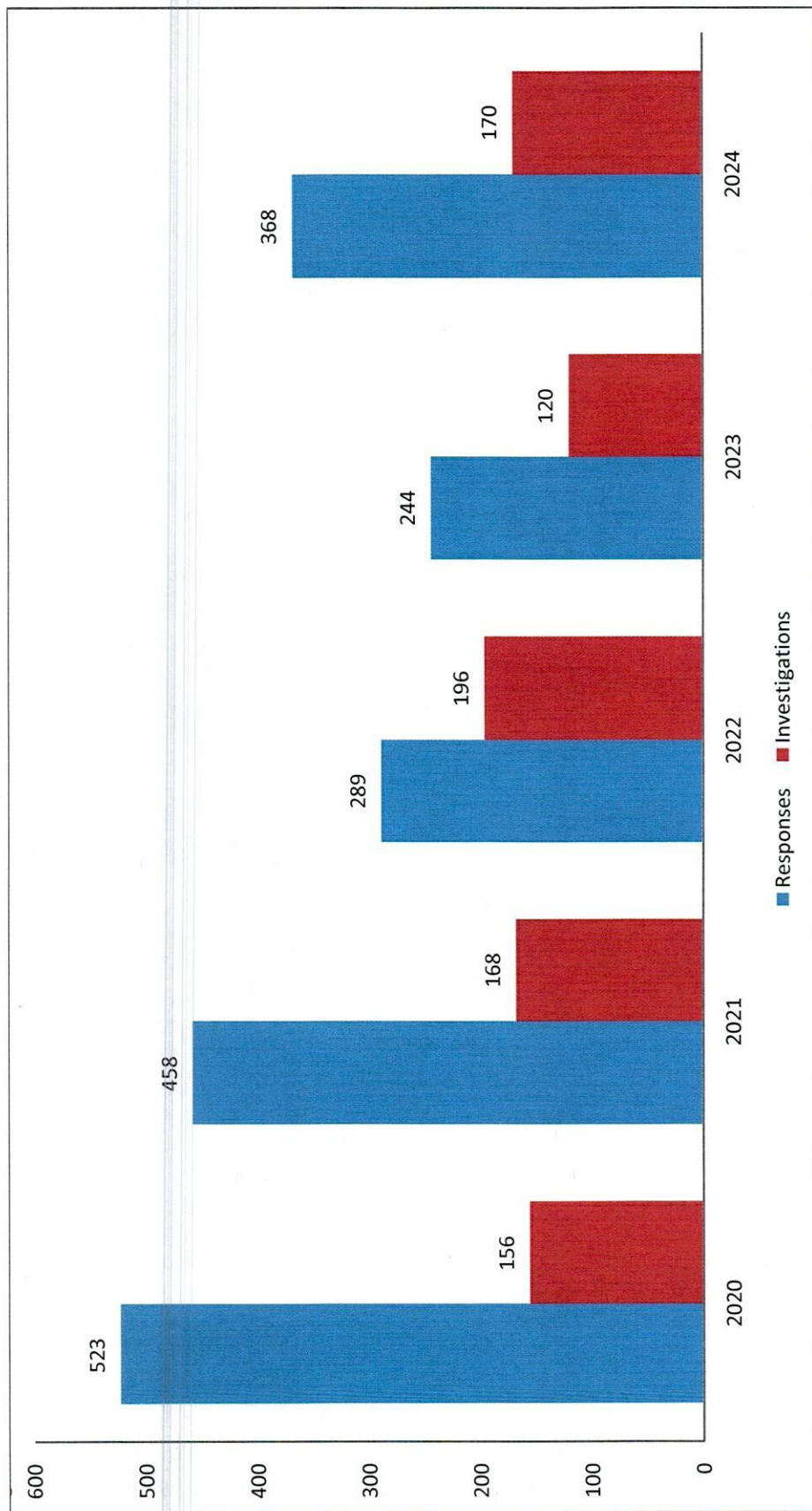
# STATISTICS

# Bridgewater Township Police Department 2020-2024 Calls for Service

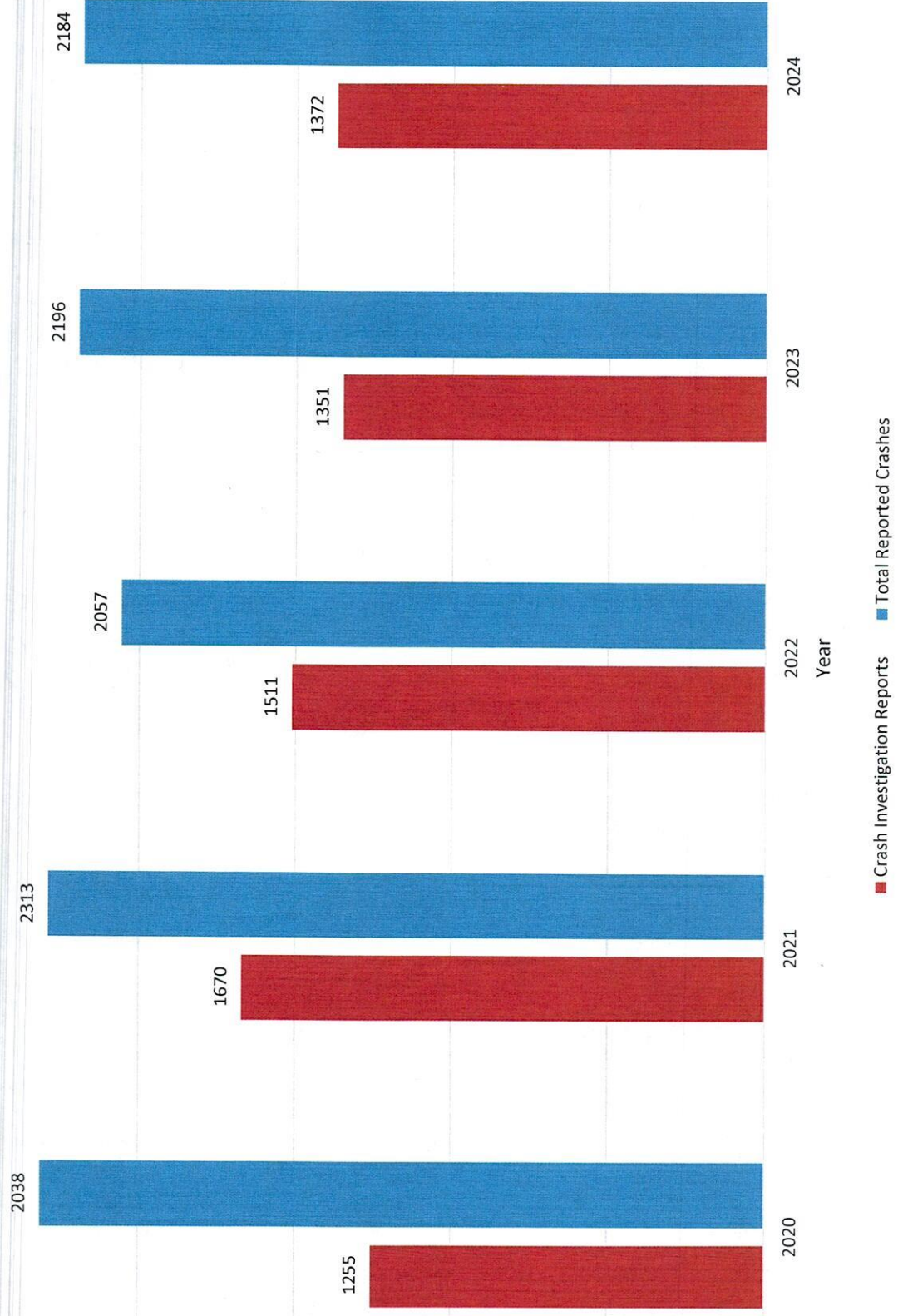




# Bridgewater Township Police Department Domestic Violence – 5 Year Trend

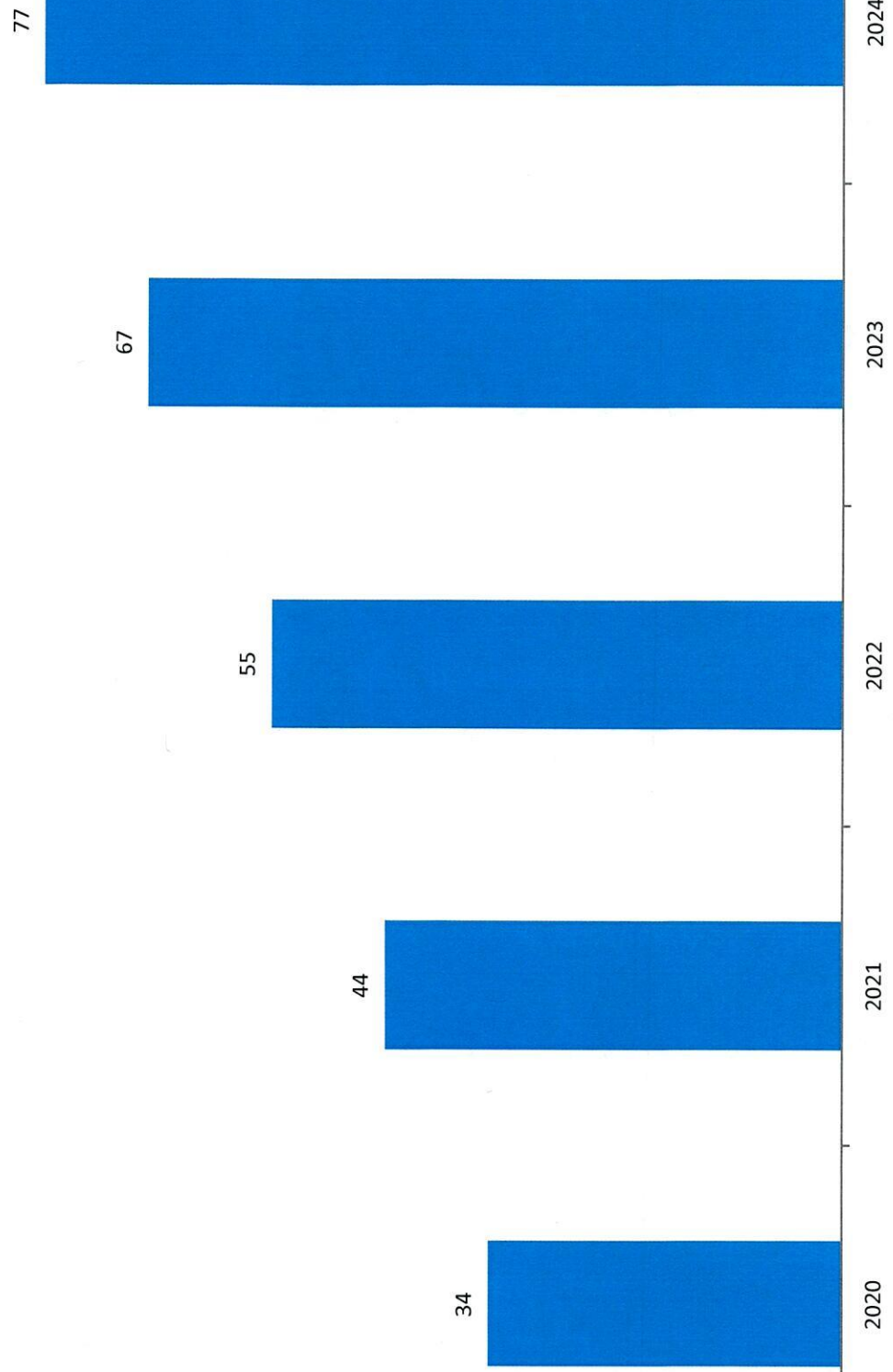


Bridgewater Police Department  
Motor Vehicle Crash Report  
2020-2024



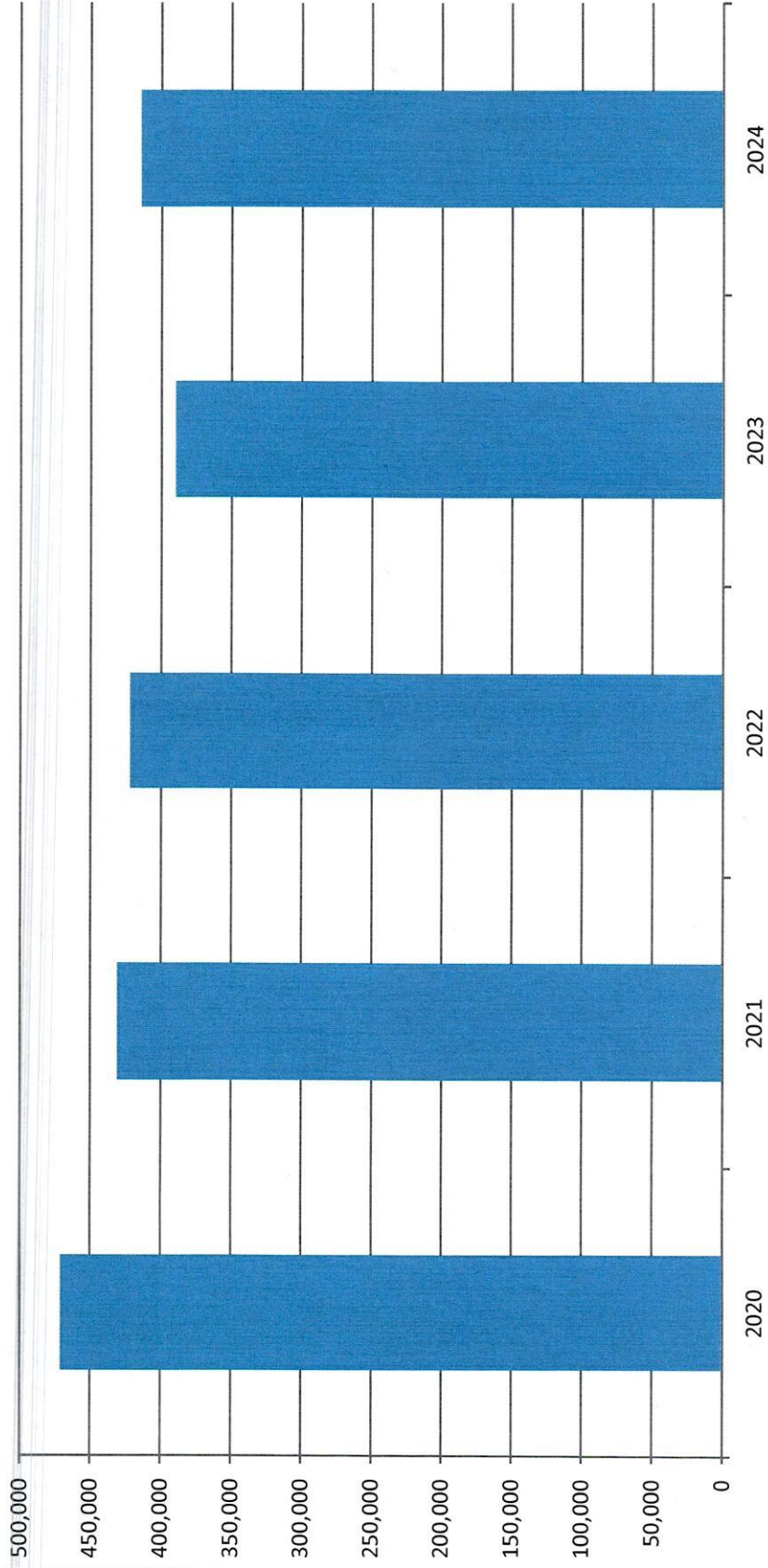


**Bridgewater Police Department  
D.W.I. Arrests  
2020-2024**



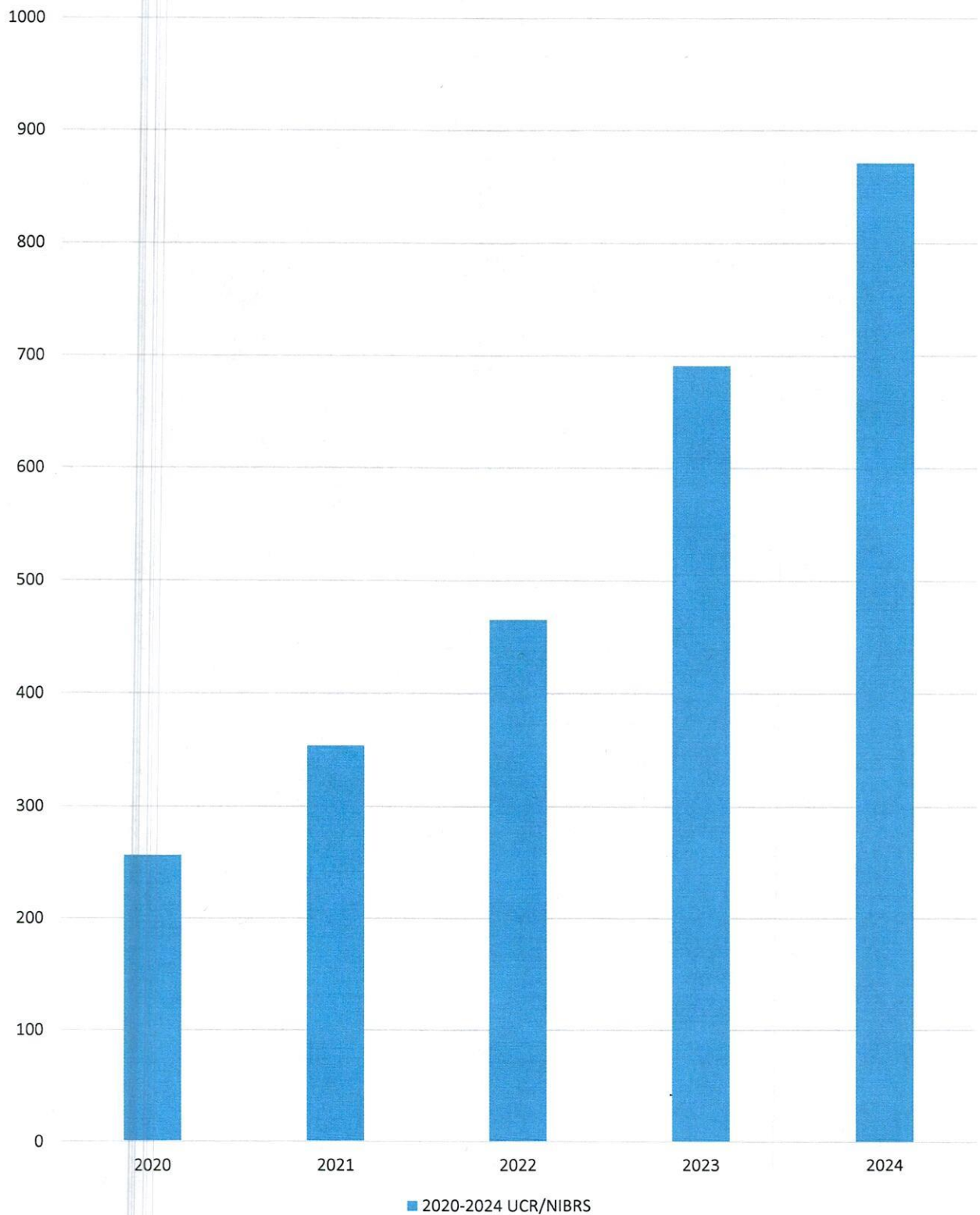
# Bridgewater Township Police Department Annual Patrol Mileage

2020-2024

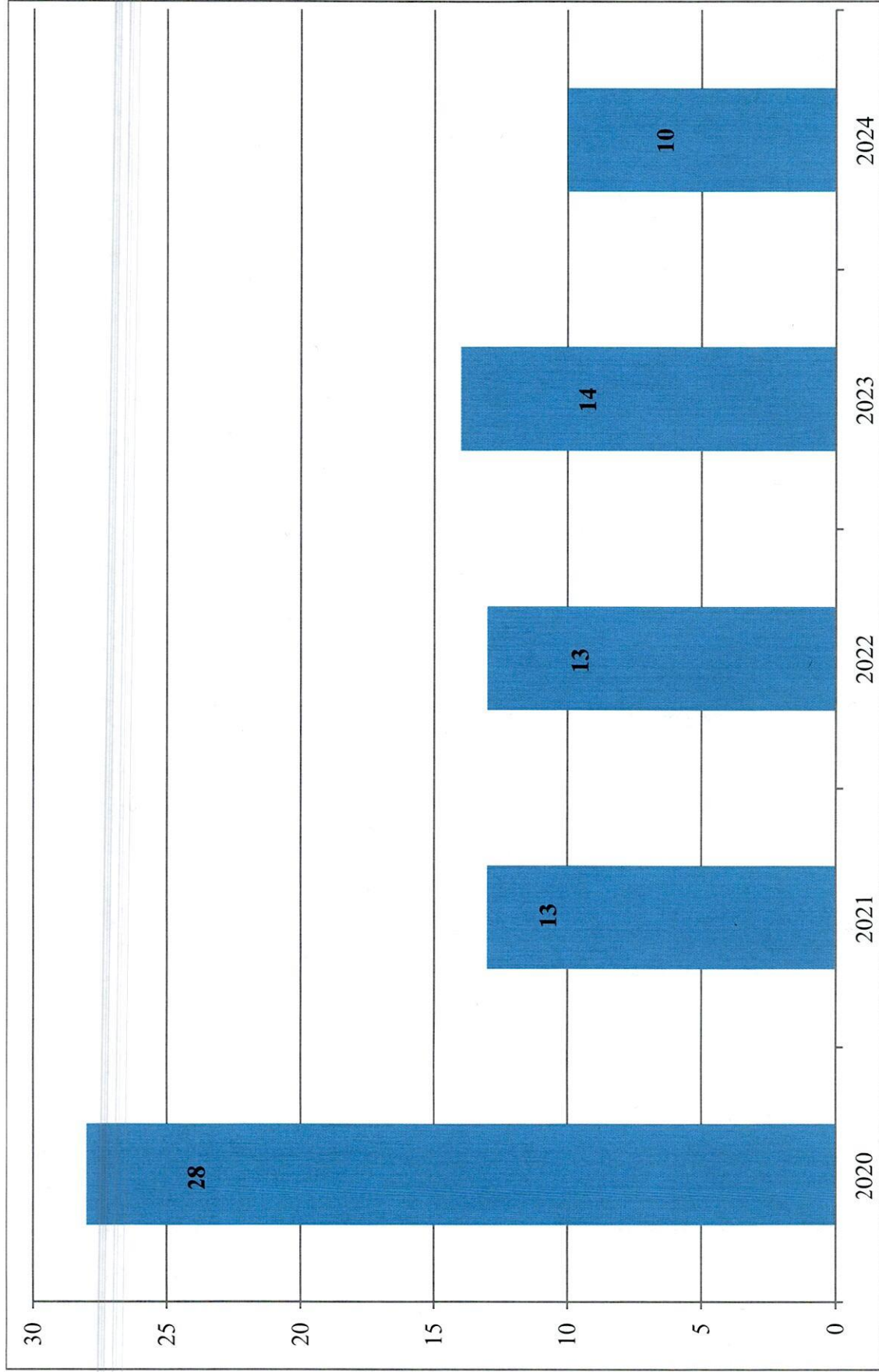




# 2020-2023 UCR Group A Offenses 2024 NIBRS Group

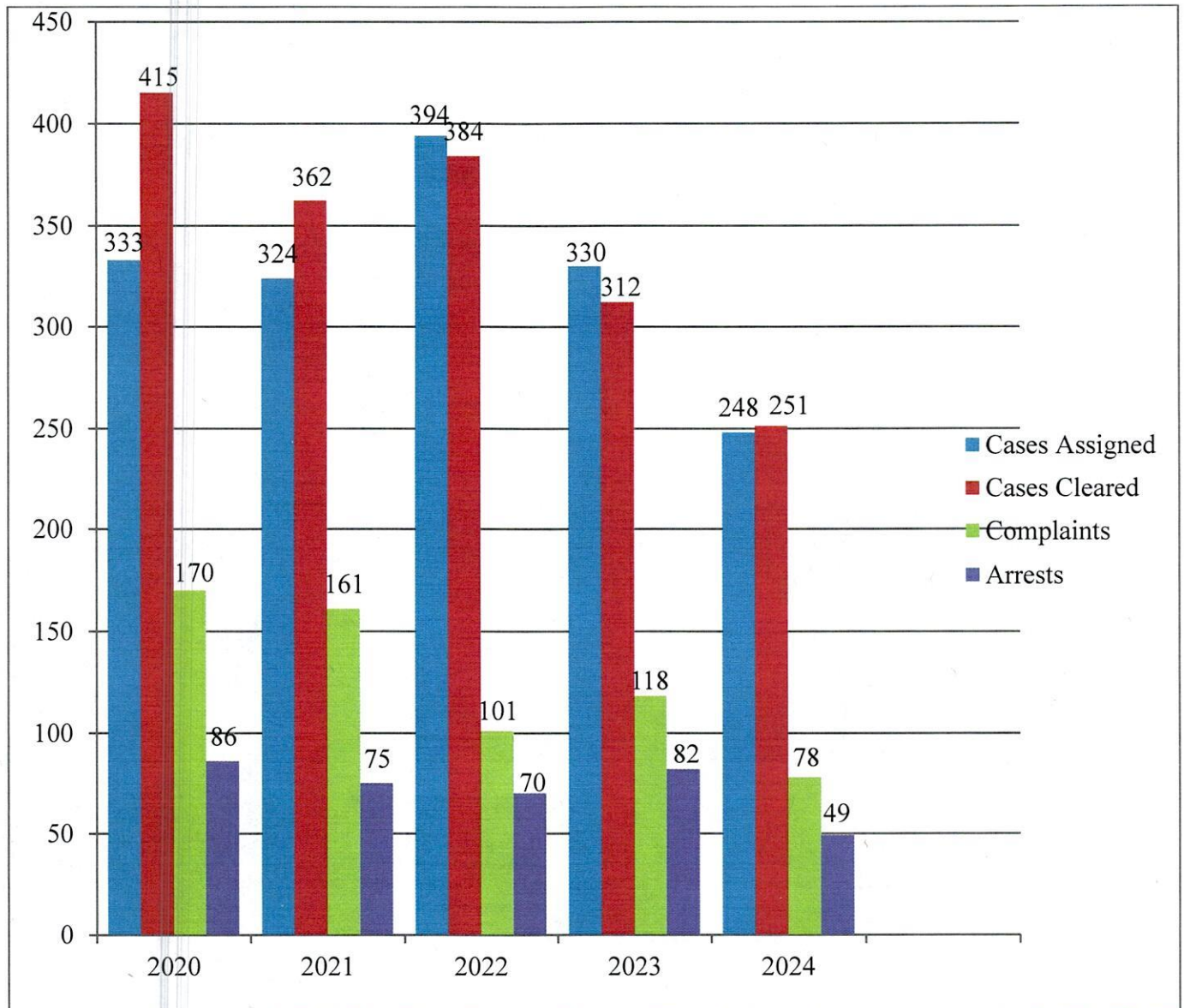


**Youth Services Bureau  
Stationhouse Adjustment  
2020-2024**





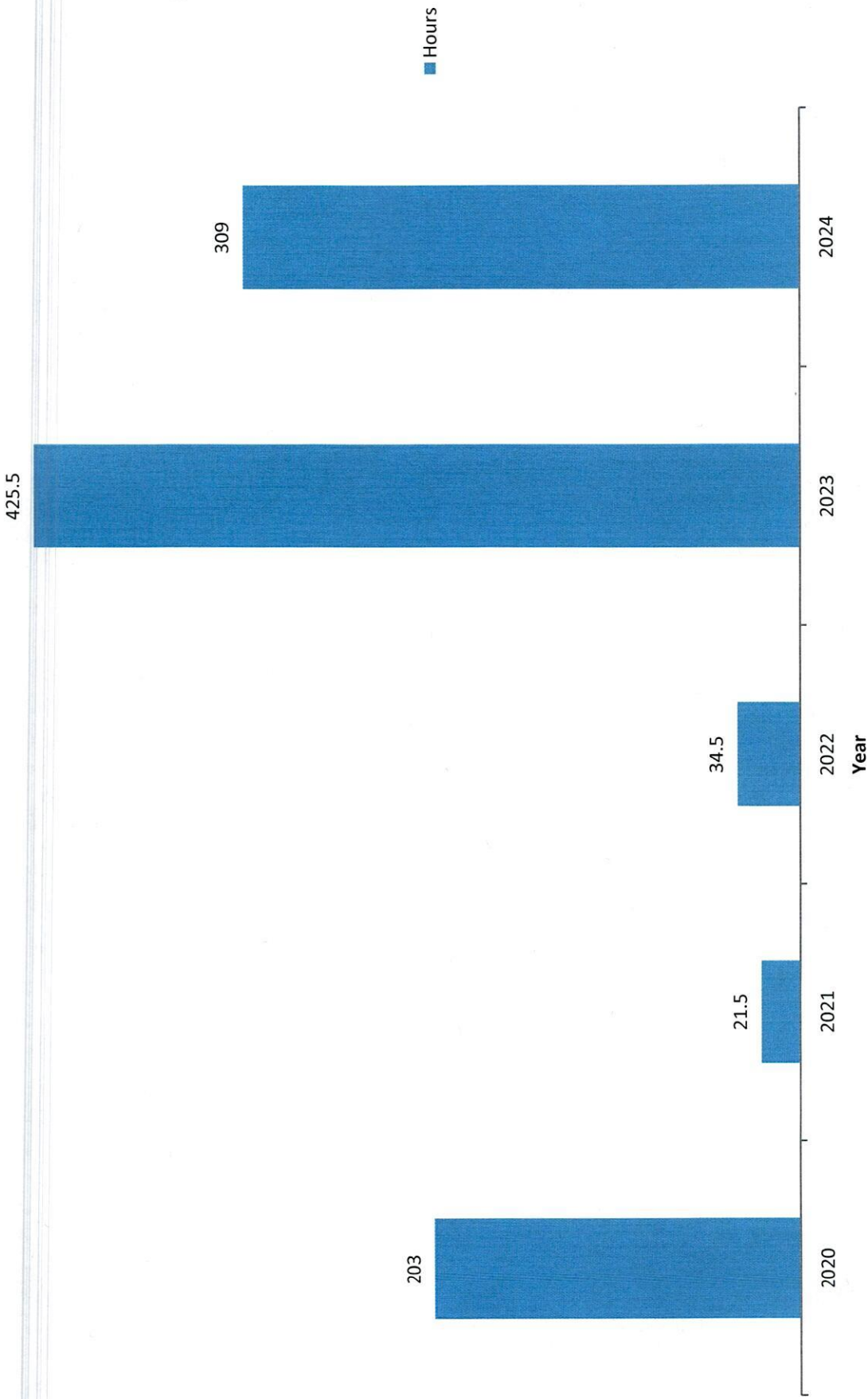
**Criminal Investigation Bureau  
Yearly Comparison 2020-2024**



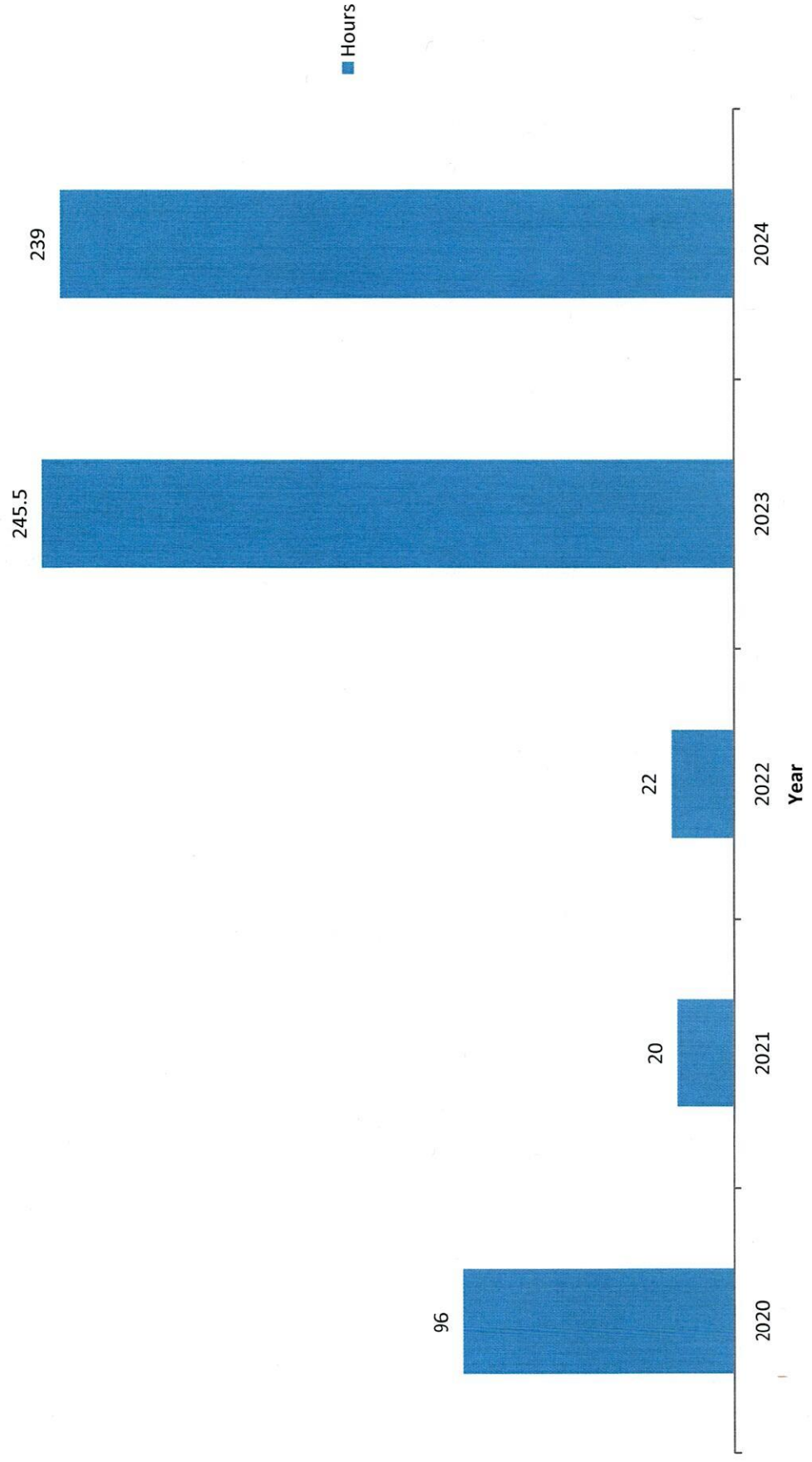
2024 Traffic Safety Bureau Year End Report													
To: Chief John Mitzak													
From: Sgt. Dan Hennessey													
2024	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Fatal M.V.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.V.													
Crash Investigations	39	36	33	47	33	38	19	28	16	28	47	43	407
Directed Patrols	29	15	13	7	17	5	28	13	8	9	3	4	151
Car Seat Inspections	4	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	14



**Bridgewater Municipal Court Overtime  
Yearly Comparison**

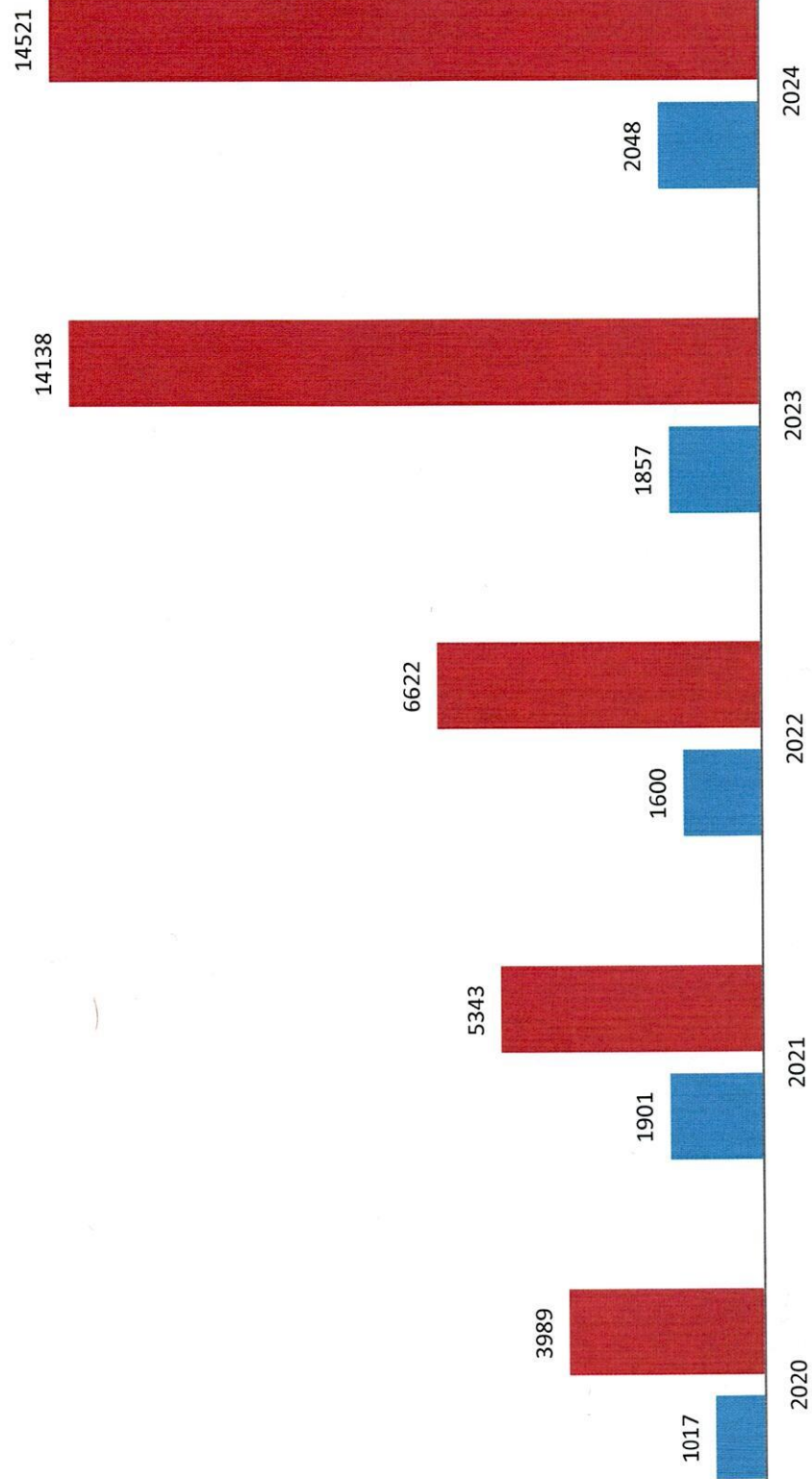


## Somerville Municipal Court Overtime Yearly Comparison



# Bridgewater Township Police Department 2020-2024 Fire/EMS Calls for Service

■ Fire ■ EMS





**Monthly Operations Division Activity Statistics Comparison**  
**2023-2024**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Adult Arrests</b>	<b>Juvenile Arrests</b>	<b>DWI</b>	<b>Warrants Served</b>
January 2023	21	2	2	15
January 2024	31	2	10	7
February 2023	35	5	6	3
February 2024	24	1	4	17
March 2023	36	0	6	15
March 2024	38	1	7	15
April 2023	26	0	3	13
April 2024	24	0	4	7
May 2023	22	0	3	5
May 2024	26	0	7	7
June 2023	26	0	3	5
June 2024	23	0	2	8
July 2023	38	0	9	12
July 2024	26	1	6	13
August 2023	34	0	5	13
August 2024	37	1	4	14
September 2023	37	0	11	9
September 2024	27	1	7	6
October 2023	32	0	7	11
October 2024	36	1	9	9
November 2023	32	1	6	17
November 2024	36	1	12	11
December 2023	24	0	6	19
December 2024	32	0	5	10
<b>TOTAL 2023</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>TOTAL 2024</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>124</b>