



# BPD PRIORITY RESPONSE PLAN

April 15, 2024



**IF YOU HAVE A CRIME OR AN EMERGENCY,**

**CALL 9-1-1**

The Priority Response Plan described in these pages applies to non-emergency incidents when life-safety is **NOT** at stake.

Life-safety incidents **WILL** receive a police response.

Call **9-1-1**, not dispatch, for in-progress incidents when people or property are at immediate risk.



## RATIONALE

# Why did the BPD create the Priority Response Plan?

**Police Staffing** ↓ **Incident Volume** ↑

**Since July 01 2020, staffing has fallen by nearly 30 sworn officers.  
During that time, incident volume has risen.**

**The following pages show data about**

- **sworn officer headcount**
- **incident volume**
- **new deployment plans**
- **efforts to create new resources**

**All of these factor into the ways we are addressing our staffing crisis.**



# BPD SWORN OFFICER HEADCOUNT, 2015-2024

TOTAL SWORN HEADCOUNT, as of the first of each month, month-by-month



In June 2020, the Burlington City Council voted to reduce, by attrition, the BPD's authorized headcount from 105 to 74. An officer exodus ensued. In Oct 2021, the council raised the cap from 74 to 87, but it was not until a new, strong police contract was ratified in July 2022 that headcount stabilized. We are now working to rebuild.



# 66 TOTAL, 59 AVAILABLE

As of April 01 2024, we are authorized for 87 sworn officers. Of those 87, we have 66. Of those 66, 59 are able to be deployed as solo officers.



minus 7 injured, light, military, VPA, etc. = 59  
minus 15 supervisors = 44  
minus 10 detectives = 34  
minus 7 airport officers = 27  
minus 3 special assignments = 24

# 24 officers on Patrol





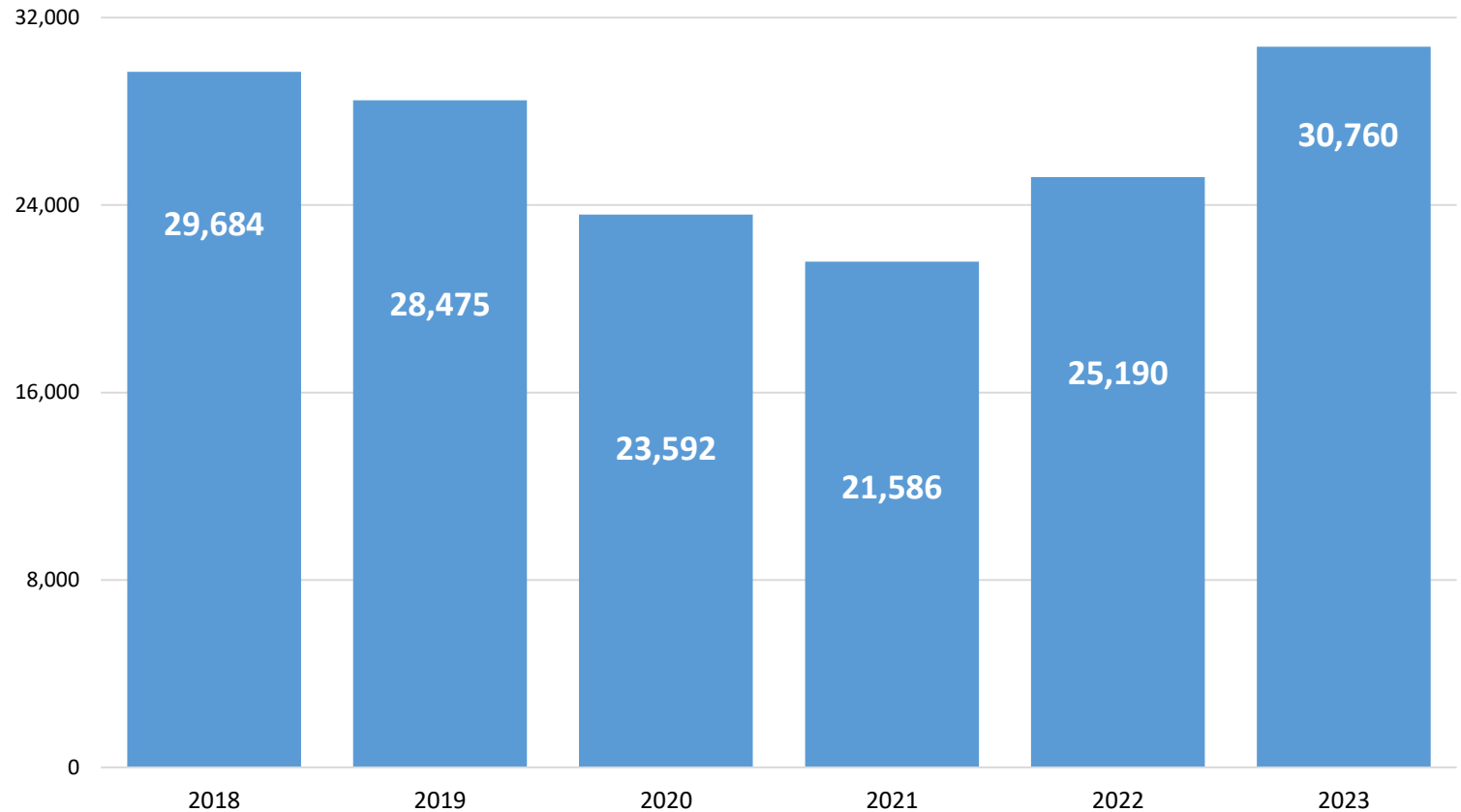
# INCIDENT VOLUME

Total incident volume in 2023 was higher than in any of the preceding five years. Conversely, non-supervisory sworn-officer staffing on patrol is down 54% from 2018 (24 in 2024 vs 52 in 2018)

Additionally, as of April 15, 2024, this year's incidents are up another 9% over April 15, 2023.

Thus far in 2024, **886 incidents of 7,598—or 12%—have been “stacked” according to the Priority Response Plan.** See the following page for a definition of what it means for a call to be “stacked.”

## Total Incidents per Year



It should be noted that not all incidents are crimes. They are more accurately “calls for service.” As shown on the next slide, there are more than 100 categories of incident, some of which are crimes and some of which are not.



# PUBLIC SAFETY ROLES UNIQUE TO BPD

Public safety is more than police. When sworn-officer staffing began to fall, we created the 2021 Public Safety Continuity Plan. That plan augmented an existing non-sworn role:

- **Community Service Officers** (CSOs),

These are unarmed, unsworn officers who answer quality-of-life calls for service. BPD currently has six employees in the role, and **the budget allots us 11 CSOs and one CSM** (or Community Service Manager). The role is also a stepping stone to becoming a police officer.

**BPD  
currently  
has 6 CSOs  
and 6 CSLs**

The 2021 Public Safety Continuity Plan also created:

- **Community Support Liaisons** (CSLs)

These are embedded social workers with expertise in mental health, substance use disorder, and homelessness. BPD currently has five employees in the role, and **the budget allots us six CSLs and one CSS** (or Community Support Supervisor). The CSLs are the core of our new CAIP division (Crisis, Advocacy, Intervention Programs).





# THE PRIORITY RESPONSE PLAN

PRIORITY 1	High priority.
PRIORITY 2	Middle priority. (*) = situationally dependent; some may be Priority 1 or Priority 3.
PRIORITY 3	Low priority. Response may be delayed based on officer availability; may receive a CSO response.

With staffing down and incident volume up, the BPD had to create the Priority Response Plan. It husbands resources while remaining true to our duty to prioritize our **NEIGHBORS' PHYSICAL SAFETY** and their sense of safety. **The Plan goes into effect when two or fewer sworn police officers are available for response; when that happens, Priority 2 and Priority 3 incidents get "stacked" and do not receive an in-person response.** When three or more officers are available, they are dispatched to all incidents regardless of Priority category.

**Incidents labeled "CSO" or "CSL"** initially receive a response from a CSO or CSL, rather than a sworn officer, unless the incident evolves in a way that changes its category or requires a sworn officer.

**Incidents labeled "ONL"** (for "Online Only") are to be diverted to an online reporting function. Note that larcenies and retail thefts are NOT supposed to be online reports. See Slide 19.

Additionally, during daytime weekday hours when DSB detectives are available, **DSB will handle untimely deaths.**

<b>911 Hangup</b>	Cruelty to Animals	CSO	Illegal Dumping	CSO	<b>Robbery</b>
Airport AOA Violation	Custodial Interference *		Impeding a Public Officer		<b>Runaway</b>
Airport Duress Alarm	Disorderly Conduct *		Impersonation of a Police Officer *		Runaway Apprehension
Airport PHASE	Disorderly Conduct by Elec Comm	ONL	Inciting a Felony		Search
Alarm *	Disturbance		Intoxication	CSO	Search Warrant
Alcohol Offense	DLS		Investigation - Cold Case		Service Coordination
Animal Problem	Domestic Assault - Felony		Juvenile Problem *		Sex Offender Registry Violation
Arrest on Warrant	Domestic Assault - Misd		<b>Kidnapping</b>		<b>Sexual Assault</b>
<b>Arson</b>	Domestic Disturbance		Larceny - from a Building		Sheltering/Aiding Runaway
Assault - Aggravated	Drugs		Larceny - from a Motor Vehicle		SRO Activity
Assault - Simple	Drugs - Possession		Larceny - Other		<b>Stalking</b>
Assist - Agency	Drugs - Sale		<b>Larceny from a Person</b>		Stolen Vehicle
Assist - Car Seat Inspection	<b>DUI</b>		<b>Lewd and Lascivious Conduct</b>		Subpoena Service
Assist - K9	Eluding Police		Lockdown Drill		<b>Suicide - Attempted</b>
Assist - Motorist	Embezzlement	ONL	Lockdown Drill		Suspicious Event *
Assist - Other	Enabling Consumption by Minors		Mental Health Issue *		Theft of Rental Property
Assist - Public	Encampment Outreach	CSL	Minor in Possession of Alcohol		Theft of Service
Background Investigation	Encampment Policy	CSL	<b>Missing Person</b>		Threats/Harassment *
Bad Check	<b>Escape</b>		Motor Vehicle Complaint	CSO	Traffic
Bar / Liquor License Violation	Extortion	ONL	Neighbor Dispute	CSL	Trespass *
<b>Bomb Threat</b>	False Info to Police		Noise	CSO	<b>TRO/FRO Service</b>
Burglary *	False Pretenses	ONL	Obstruction of Justice		<b>TRO/FRO Violation</b>
CHINS	False Public Alarms		Operations		<b>Unlawful Restraint</b>
Community Outreach	False Swearing		Ordinance Violation - Other	CSO	<b>Untimely Death</b>
Compliance Check	Fireworks	CSO	<b>Overdose</b>		Use of Elec Comm to Lure a Child
Computer Crime	Foot Patrol		Parking	CSO	Uttering a Forged Instrument
Contributing to Delinquency of Minor	Forgery	ONL	Possession of Stolen Property		Vandalism
Counterfeiting	Found/Lost Property	CSO	Prescription Fraud	ONL	VIN verification
<b>Crash - Fatality</b>	Fraud	ONL	Prohibited Acts		Violation of Conditions of Release *
<b>Crash - Injury to person(s)</b>	Fugitive From Justice		Property Damage	CSO	Voyeurism *
Crash - LSA *	Graffiti Removal		Reckless Endangerment *		Weapons Offense
Crash - Non-Investigated	Hindering Arrest		Recovered Property	CSO	Welfare Check *
Crash - Property damage only	<b>Homicide</b>		<b>Resisting Arrest</b>		
<b>Cruelty to a Child</b>	Identity Theft	ONL	Retail Theft		
			<b>Roadway Hazard</b>		





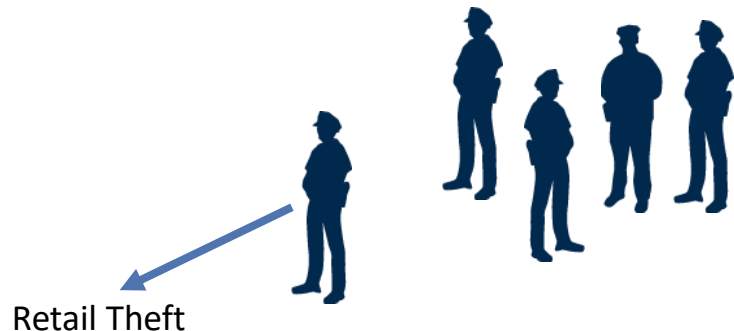
# HOW THE PRIORITY RESPONSE PLAN WORKS

When only two or fewer officers are available, the Priority Response Plan goes into effect.

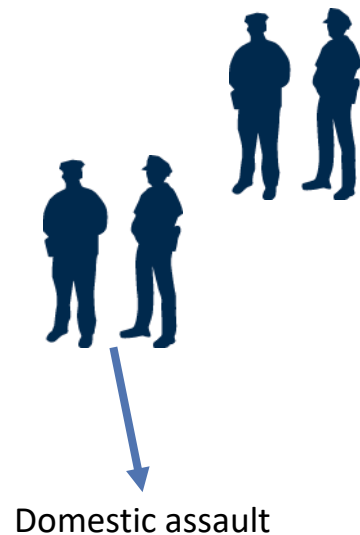
1. In this example, there are five non-supervisory officers assigned to the day shift. They respond to every call for service in the order the calls come in.



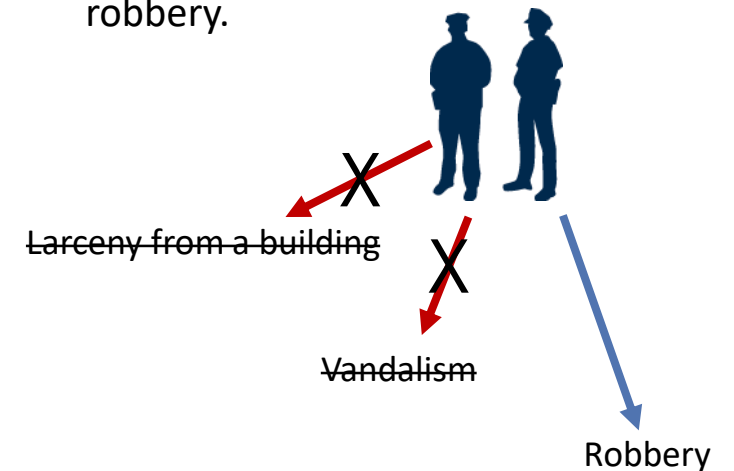
2. Dispatch receives a call about a retail theft, which is a Priority 3 call for service. Officer 1 responds, leaving Officers 2, 3, 4, and 5 available.



3. Officers 2 and 3 are dispatched to a Domestic Assault call, which, like most Priority 1 incidents, requires a two-officer response. Now only Officers 4 and 5 remain. At this point, the Priority Response Plan goes into effect.



4. If anything other than a Priority 1 comes in—a report of vandalism or a larceny from a building, for example, which are Priority 3 calls—the call will be “stacked” until more than two officers are once again available. Officers 4 and 5 have to remain available in case of a life-safety incident like a robbery.





## HOW IT WAS – COMMUNITY POLICING BY AREA

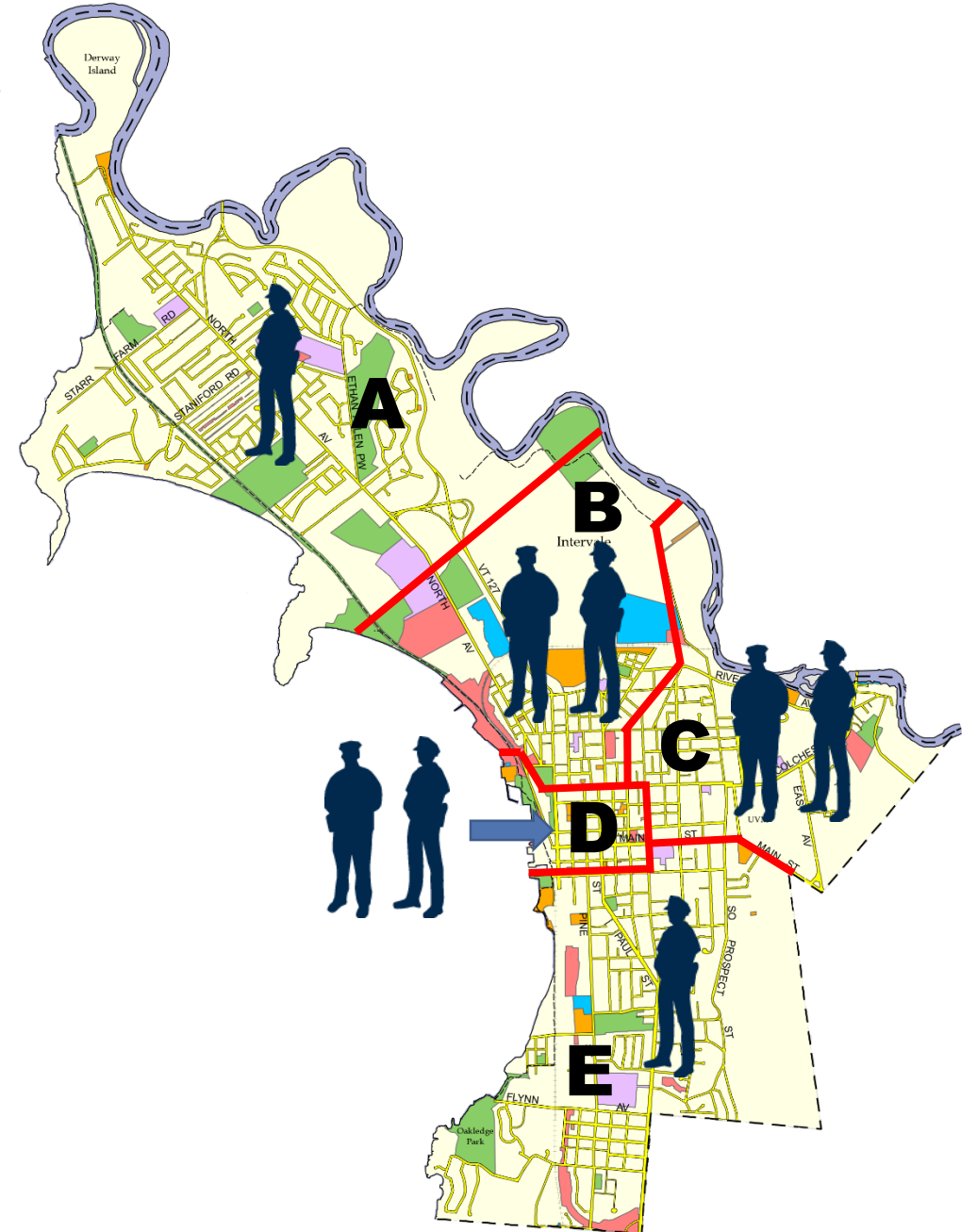
For more than two decades, until 2021, the BPD employed a community policing model that assigned officers to **steady geographic areas**, so they could connect with Burlington’s neighborhoods and residents.

The BPD divided the city into five areas:

- A = The New North End → one officer
- B = The Old North End → two officers
- C = The Hill Section and University → two officers
- D = Downtown → two officers
- E = The South End → one officer

This model required that **eight officers** be assigned to each daytime and evening patrol shift. Many shifts had nine. (The midnight shift had five officers assigned.) Each shift also had a sergeant and lieutenant assigned.

Additionally, each day shift had one CSO assigned.





# HOW IT IS

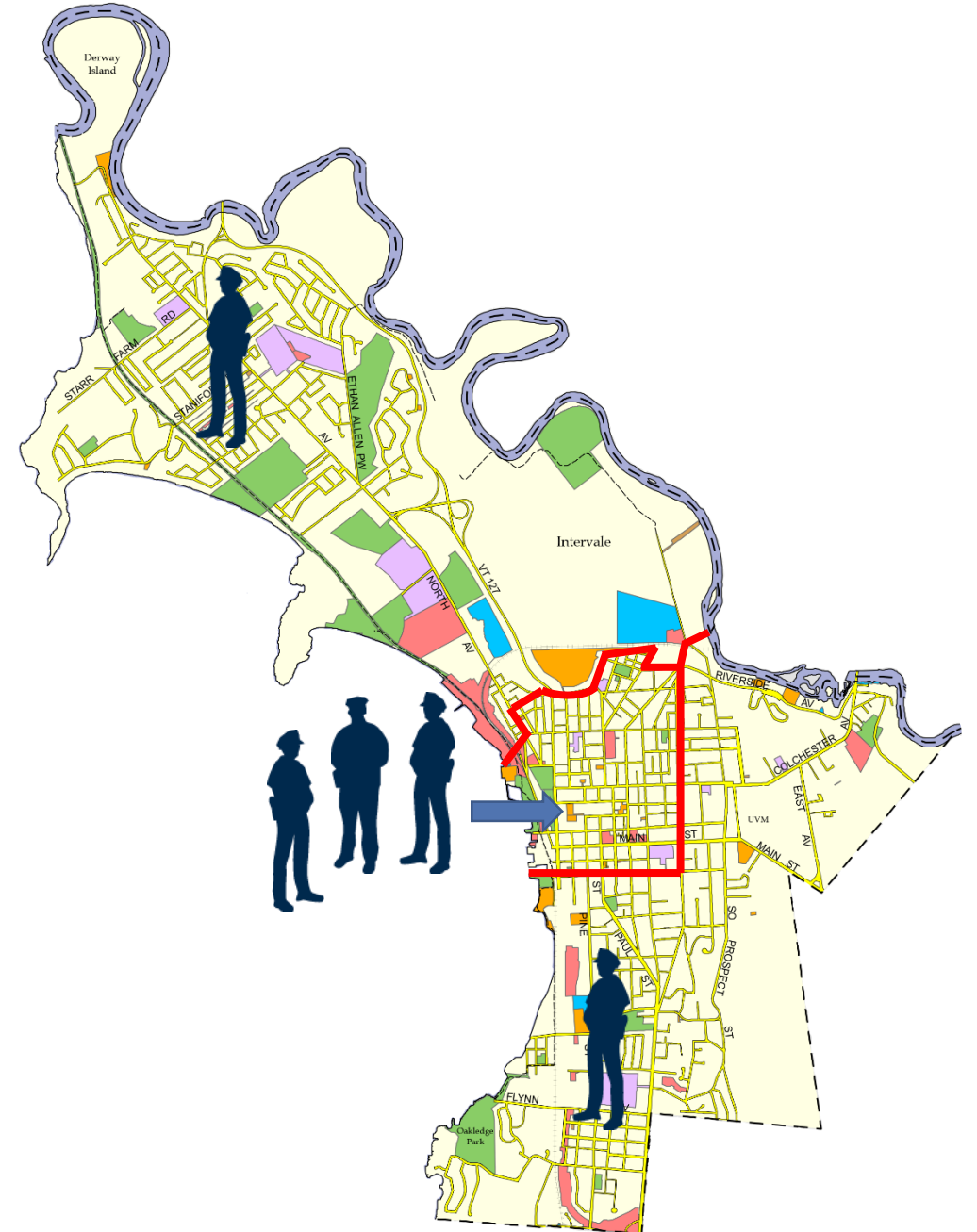
Today we have, at most, **five officers** assigned to each daytime and evening patrol shift, rather than eight. (The midnight shift has two officers assigned.) We can no longer cover an area-based deployment model.

When we have five or more officers available, three officers and two CSOs are assigned to the **City Center Area**, or CCA. These officers are able to respond outside the CCA when called, but not proactively. On a day-to-day basis, two officers may be assigned specifically to the Church Street Marketplace.

Two officers are assigned outside the CCA. One officer is assigned as Rover North and one as Rover South.

Responses outside the CCA unfortunately experience delays.

When there are four or fewer officers available on a given shift, all officers are given “cover north / cover south” assignments.



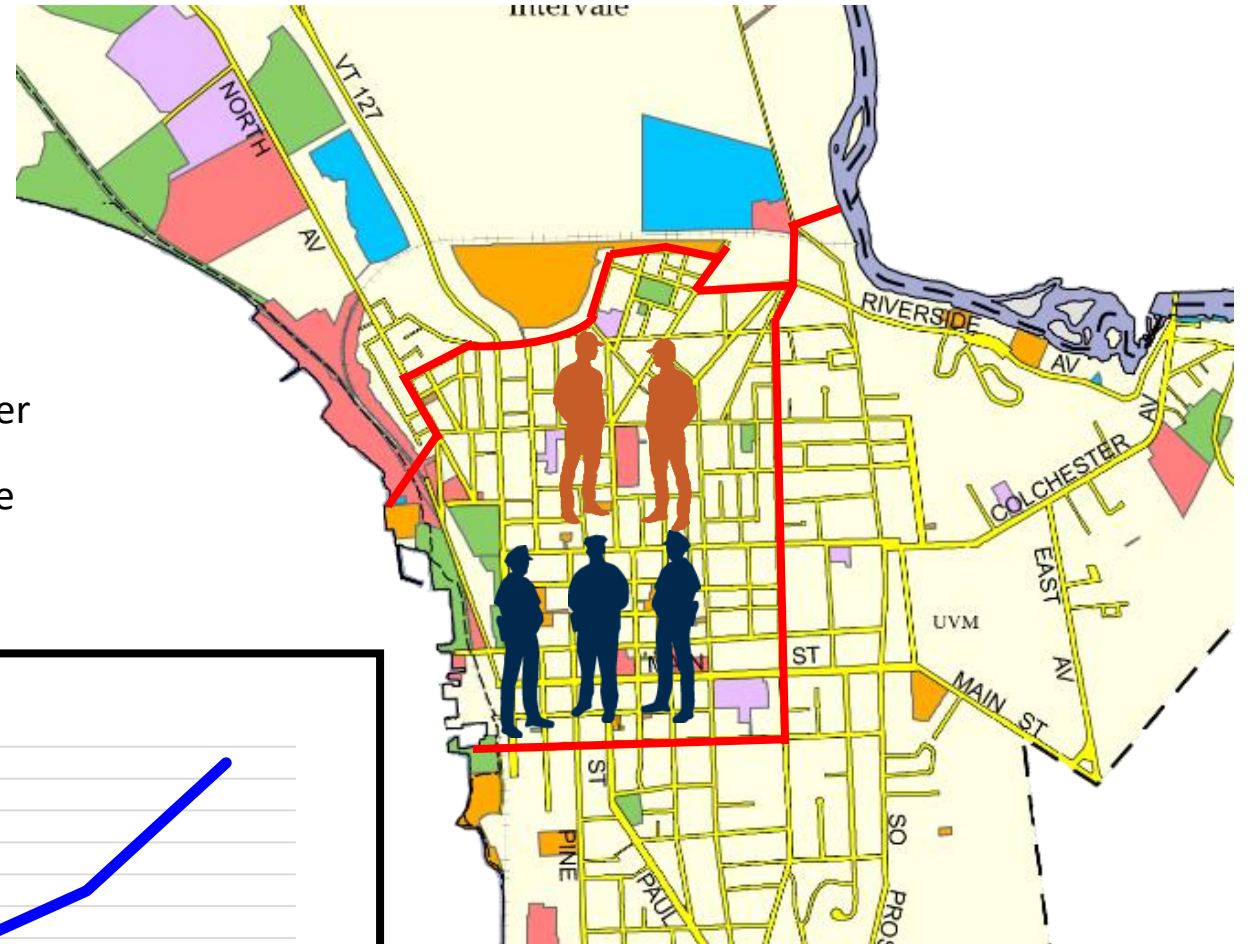


# THE CITY CENTER AREA

Building off the BPD’s long history of community-oriented, area-based patrol, but acknowledging the reality of diminished resources, **the City Center Area** helps us do what we can with what we’ve got. We also deploy our CSOs in the area, shown in orange. CSOs and officers focus include:

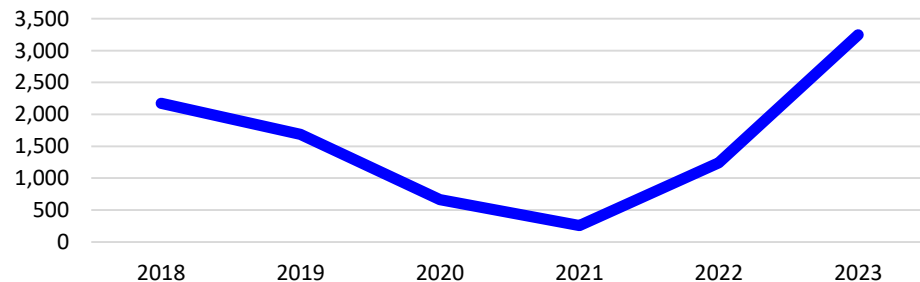
- the Marketplace
- the Public Library
- City Hall Park
- the Downtown Transit Center

Personnel in the CCA will also proactively address King Street, the Waterfront, Battery Park, North Street, and Roosevelt Park.



Foot Patrol

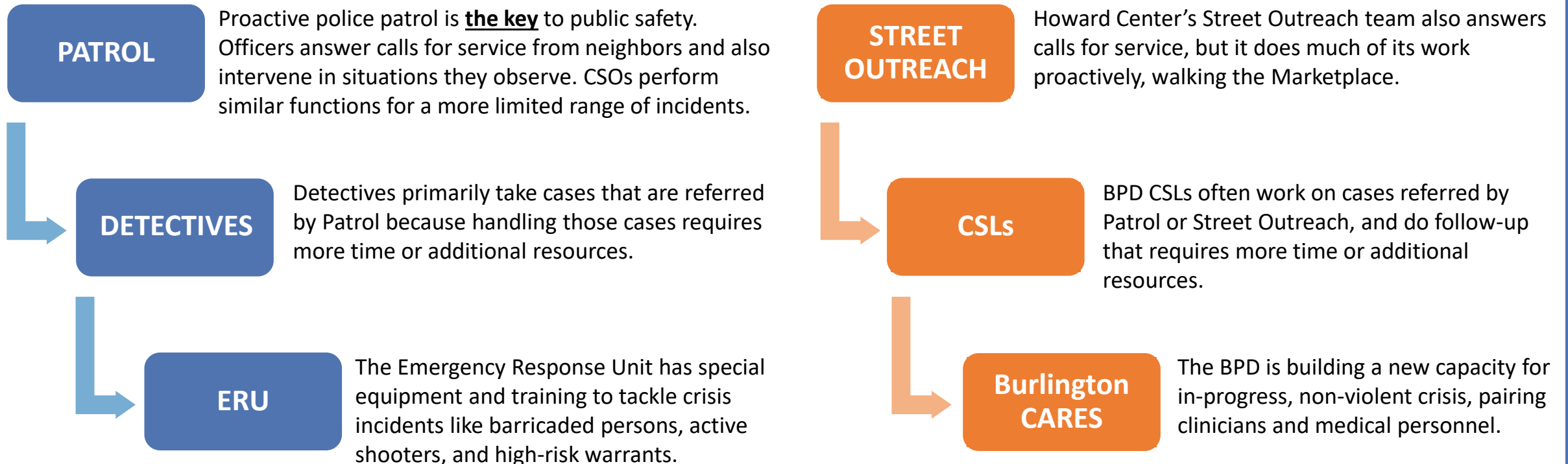
Foot patrol is an important part of being responsive in the CCA, and the BPD has significantly increased this practice.





# TIERS OF RESPONSE

Burlington is doing innovative things that most communities are not: some calls for service are being handled by our CSOs; and we've developed an in-house social-work capability in the form of the CSLs. For reference, the **Police Department's response types** can be analogized to the city's various **in-the-field social-service responses**:





IN MANY CITIES FACING STAFFING SHORTAGES, PRIORITY RESPONSE IS THE LEAST BAD OPTION.

# Phoenix police may not send officers to respond to certain types of calls. Here's why.

## Asheville police release list of calls officers will no longer respond to

Move comes in response to dozens of officers leaving police force in past year, officials say

tempt to not overwork an understaffed police force  
Department may stop responding to some



On July 3, @DallasPD will require mandatory online reporting of certain NON-EMERGENCY offenses through the Dallas Police Online Reporting System. Its quick, saves you time, and frees our officers for higher emergency calls. Head to [dallaspolice.net](http://dallaspolice.net) to file, or learn more.

<p><b>DALLAS POLICE ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Non-emergency reports must be filed online!</p> <p>NO WAIT TIME! EASY! QUICK!</p>	<p><b>SISTEMA DE REPORTE EN LINEA DE LA POLICIA DE DALLAS</b></p> <p>¡Los reportes de incidentes que no son emergencia deben realizarse en línea!</p> <p>¡SIN TIEMPO DE ESPERA! ¡FÁCIL Y RÁPIDO!</p>
<p><b>ONLINE REPORTING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accident Reports - Harassing Phone Calls</li> <li>Burglary of a Motor Vehicle - Graffiti</li> <li>Theft - Credit/Debit Card Abuse</li> <li>Criminal Mischief - Reckless Damage</li> <li>Identity Theft - Lost Property</li> <li>Theft of Service - Burglary of a Coin Machine</li> <li>Shoplifting - Interference with Child Custody</li> </ul>	<p><b>INFORMES EN LÍNEA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reportes de accidentes - Daños criminales</li> <li>Llamadas de acoso por teléfono - Graffiti</li> <li>Robo a un vehículo motorizado - Robo</li> <li>Abuso de tarjetas de crédito/débito</li> <li>Daños por imprudencia - Robo de identidad</li> <li>Propiedad perdida - Robo de servicio</li> <li>Robo en tiendas - Robo de maquina de monedas</li> <li>Interferencia con la custodia de los hijos</li> </ul>
<p><i>The investigative process is the same as if an officer took the report at the incident scene.</i></p>	<p><i>El proceso de investigación es el mismo como si un</i></p>

10:39 AM · Jun 23, 2023

20 ❤️ Reply Copy link to post Apr 15, 2024 - all data preliminary & subject to change

LOCAL

## Salem Police will no longer respond to certain lower-level calls



**Whitney Woodworth**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
Published 3:33 p.m. PT June 30, 2022 | Updated 10:14 a.m. PT July 1, 2022

AUSTIN, Texas - Starting Friday, the [Austin Police Department](#) will ask people to use 3-1-1 instead of 9-1-1 to report crimes that are no longer in process, when the suspect is no longer on scene, and there is no immediate threat to life or property.

## Pittsburgh police say they will no longer respond to calls that are not 'in-progress emergencies' amid staffing shortages

- Pittsburgh police announced this week that they will no longer respond to calls that are not 'in-progress emergencies' in the early morning hours
- Instead, lower priority calls will get sent to a telephone reporting unit

By [RACHEL BOWMAN FOR DAILYMAIL.COM](#)  
PUBLISHED: 16:51 EDT, 11 March 2024 | UPDATED: 00:25 EDT, 12 March 2024

LOCAL

## With staff stretched thin, Stockton Police to stop responding to some calls for service

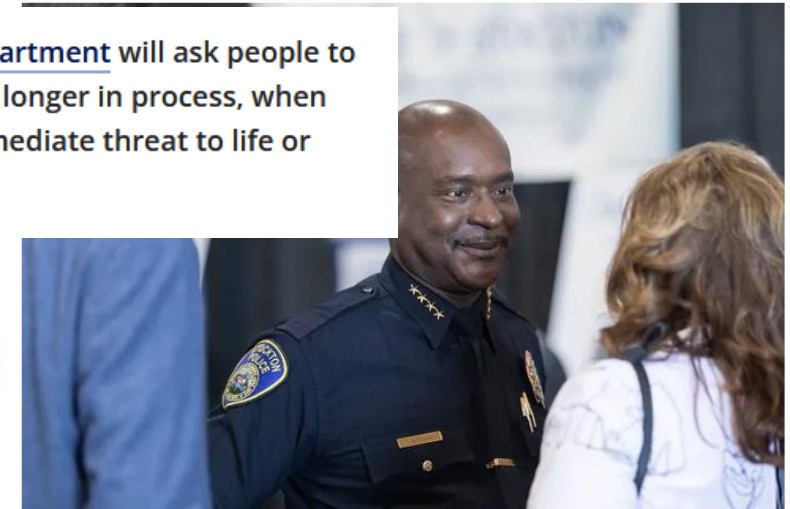
**Aaron Leathley** The Record  
Published 8:55 a.m. PT July 12, 2023 | Updated 10:00 a.m. PT July 12, 2023



Stockton Police Department will no longer dispatch officers to many of the receives reporting hit-and-runs, reckless driving, non-burglary property and other non-emergency incidents, according to an internal department memo obtained by The Record.

## Tucson Police Department to stop responding to some calls due to staffing shortage

Police Chief Stanley McFadden to all officers to stop responding to some calls due to a staffing shortage. The order is one day before a public hearing on the matter, including directing residents to report certain crimes — including domestic violence and vehicle burglary — to the police non-emergency line or on the city's reporting form.



Police Chief Stanley McFadden talks with attendees at the 2023 State of the City. "We have a great number of dedicated, passionate, honorable yet exhausted employees," a June memo from McFadden and addressed to city leaders reads. Sara Nevis, SARA NEVIS/FOR THE STOCKTON RECORD



# PITTSBURGH CURTAILS SERVICES

Just as in Burlington, police across the country are facing hard choices about response. Pittsburgh, PA, has a population of 303,000 and covers 58 square miles. They currently have 740 officers and have declared a staffing emergency. They are down about 18% from their historic full authorization of 900. For comparison, the BPD is down 35% from our historic authorization.

### OFFICER : CITIZEN ratios

Authorized ⇨ 1 : 337 for Pittsburgh vs 1 : 419 for Burlington

Actual ⇨ 1 : 410 for Pittsburgh vs 1 : 647 for Burlington

The Pittsburgh chief wants to cut the agency’s call volume from approximately 200,000 calls per year down to about 50,000. For perspective, 200,000 calls for Pittsburgh means that residents call about 6% less often, per resident, than in Burlington, with 31,000 calls for 45,000 residents.

Calls such as criminal mischief, theft, harassment, and burglary alarms will be handled by the telephone reporting unit or online reporting.

Between the hours of 3 a.m. and 7 a.m., there won’t be a desk officer at any of Pittsburgh’s six zone stations. On some overnight shifts, there will only be 22 officers to cover the entire city—a shocking 1-to-13,772 ratio. In Burlington, with one supervisor and two officers on most overnight shifts, the ratio is 1-to-15,000.



911

## Pittsburgh police will only respond to calls of in-progress emergencies as part of new staffing plan

Chief Larry Sciroto aims to reduce the bureau’s call volume from 200,000 calls to 50,000 calls this year

March 12, 2024 12:55 PM



Photo/Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Facebook page

By Joanna Putman

Police1

PITTSBURGH –The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police has implemented a new response policy. Beginning March 11, officers will only respond to calls of



## SUMMARY

# **The Priority Response Plan is not optimal.**

**The Chief of Police has sought to make the Plan as non-disruptive as possible. In fact, many other cities with smaller staffing declines have implemented more severe measures. Regardless, the Priority Response Plan is not how the Burlington Police Department wants to police. Before implementing the plan in May 2021, the BPD's default was to respond to every call. That is not possible with current staffing.**

**We are working to create new resources and hire new officers to return to that default posture again.**

**Our goal is to achieve a healthy staffing level with a variety of roles that allows us to deliver the service that our neighbors deserve, and that the people of the BPD *want* to provide.**





## THE BPD IS HIRING!

**\$72,248 to \$79,693  
starting pay\***

**\$100,000  
top pay**

**and a \$15,000  
hiring bonus**

- City retirement with 5-year vesting
- Shift differential, weekend, and holiday pay
- **full medical benefits** and wellness incentives
- Retirement after 20 years of service at 50% salary
- Retirement after 25 years of service at 75% salary
- 15-step pay scale for non-supervisory employees
- Overtime can be received as cash or vacation accrual
- **10-hour workday, 4-days-on/3-days-off schedule**
- **Weekends off every other month**
- Yearly education bonus
- Beards and tattoos permitted
- Various **specialty assignments** such as detectives, narcotics, K9, domestic violence prevention, airport
- **Applicant can be a non-U.S. citizen** if applicant is a permanent resident / green-card holder

\*depending on experience

[www.bpdcareers.com](http://www.bpdcareers.com)



# BPD NON-EMERGENCY PHONE TREE EXTENSIONS

**To report a crime or an in-progress incident, or for emergency services, please call 9-1-1.**

**Non-Emergency Phone Number: (802) 658-2704**

## **Press 1 for Parking**

This will route you to the Parking Department. If you suspect your vehicle has been towed, have a question about parking, received a parking ticket, or had issues with a parking meter, your inquiry should be directed to the Parking Department, which is not part of the BPD

## **Press 2 for Records Division**

The Records Division assists with completing requests for records associated with BPD, including FOIA requests. You may have to leave a voicemail. If you are calling to make a request, please [submit your requests online](#). If assistance is needed with filing a request, the Community Support Liaison team can provide support (option 7).

## **Press 3 for Recruitment Division**

Recruitment staff can assist with any questions related to employment at the BPD. You may have to leave a voicemail.

## **Press 4 for Property Division**

The Property Division assists with the retrieval of personal property and is to be used for picking up your property. **This is not to be used for reporting any lost or found property**, which should be done through dispatch (option 9). The pick-up hours for property are 9AM to 10AM or 4PM to 5PM, Monday through Friday.

## **Press 5 for Fingerprinting Appointments and Permitting Applications**

The Uniform Bureau Support & Administrative Coordinator is responsible for scheduling these appointments and processing permit applications. You may need to leave a voicemail. For faster service, please visit the [Services & Guidance](#) page of our website.

## **Press 6 for Alarm Billing and Accounting**

You may need to leave a voicemail for the BPD Accountant.

## **Press 7 for Community Support Liaison (CSL) Team**

The CSL team can assist with navigating issues associated with identified social service needs or provide guidance on how to navigate other quality-of-life problems in the community. CSLs typically work 8AM to 8PM, most days of the week. In-progress events such as welfare checks should be requested through dispatch (option 9).

## **Press 8 for Animal Issues, Noise Complaints, or Accidents without Injury**

The Community Service Officer (CSO) Team works 7 days a week, typically 8AM to 2AM. If you need assistance with a non-injury vehicle crash, an animal issue, or a noise complaint, please use 9-1-1. CSOs spend a lot of time in the community, so this option may lead to a voicemail. **DO NOT USE THIS NUMBER TO FILE A CSO REPORT.**

## **Press 9 for Dispatch**

This will bring you to a live person in our Dispatch Center. **For in-progress incidents, particularly those that involve crimes or life-safety, you must call 9-1-1.** Direct calls to Dispatch should only be used for late-reported events, or events where a critical response is NOT needed.



# ONLINE REPORTING

## Online Reporting

The following types of events are to be [reported online](#).

Bad Check	Computer Crime
Counterfeiting	Disorderly Conduct by Electronic Communication
Embezzlement	Extortion
False Pretenses	Forgery
Fraud	Identity Theft
Prescription Fraud	Theft of Rental Property
Theft of Service	Uttering a Forged instrument
Vandalism / Graffiti	Late Report Motor Vehicle Accidents

**To report an in-progress incident or for emergency services, please call 9-1-1.**  
**Non-Emergency Phone Number: (802) 658-2704**

