



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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Foreword

As Chief of Police, I am proud to present the 2024 Annual Report for the City of Mentor Police Department. This report details the activities and progress made by the department in 2024.

The format is a compilation of individual section reports brought together into a single document. This allows for a unique overview of department operations as viewed by the personnel who are responsible for program implementation. The Mentor Police Department continues to receive much support from the City Manager, his staff, other city departments, and City Council. It is vitally important to also acknowledge the support offered by the citizens of this community. Our community continues to



reach out a hand to law enforcement, and we are proud to join with you to make this city a safe place to live, work, and play.

Our department cannot accomplish anything without its greatest resource, its people. As you will read, there have been numerous accomplishments made in 2024 by the men and women of the Mentor Police Department as they served the citizens of Mentor.

Ken Gunsch
Chief of Police

Mission Statement

We, the members of the Mentor Police Department, vow to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the State of Ohio, to maintain order, and to protect life and property. We pledge to promptly deliver the highest quality service and wisely use available resources. We shall strive to improve the quality of life for the community and endeavor to be role models.

We will accomplish our mission through innovation, problem-solving and community involvement.

In accepting this challenge, we will genuinely pursue our core values of *Integrity, Caring, Fairness and Professionalism*.

INTEGRITY

We are dedicated to individually upholding the public trust and being held accountable for performing our duties ethically, morally, and honestly.

CARING

We are dedicated to showing concern, courtesy and sensitivity to ourselves, fellow employees, and those we serve. We will be compassionate and treat everyone as we wish to be treated.

FAIRNESS

We are dedicated to treating all persons with respect, understanding and dignity. We will consistently use common sense in a non-discriminatory fashion to promote harmony and equality.

PROFESSIONALISM

We are dedicated to providing the community with a competent, responsive and supportive department. We will provide quality service through effective communication, cooperation, and personal involvement. Our commitment to excellence in all we do will present a professional image.

The [Mentor Police Department](#) consists of three major divisions, each responsible for separate duties and functions, but designed to offer support to each other. Currently the Police Department consists of the Administrative Division, Operations Division, and Support Services Division. The Command Staff of the Police Department is made up of the Chief of Police, who oversees the entire Department, and three Captains each of whom command one of the three Divisions. The Command Staff works at coordinating all the efforts of the Police Department to achieve the Department's goals and objectives. The Chief and the Captains are assisted by two full time secretaries. The Victim's Assistance program is directed through the office of the Chief of Police.

Distinguished Awards

To recognize outstanding work and achievement, the Mentor Police Department has adopted the Lake County Association of Chiefs of Police (LCACP) Award Program. The awards consist of a citation bar to be worn on the officer's uniform and a written account of the award to be placed in the officer's personnel file.

Some awards are issued internally through the department. The Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service, Combat Cross, Injured on Duty, and Life Saving Award are normally awarded by the LCACP awards committee. Occasionally an officer is recognized for his or her achievements by outside agencies and businesses.

Officer of the Year (for 2023) Chuck Cox

Civilian of the Year (for 2023) Bob Pestak

VFW Public Servant of the Year Chuck Cox

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD – Mentor Mobile Green Estate (Letters dated January 16, 2024)

Lt. Paul Fiorilli	Sgt. Dustin Richard	Det. Richard Smith
Det. Brian Vernick	Det. Brian Yenkevich	Dispatcher Megan Francis
Disp. Bradley James	Disp. Erica Soeder	Victims Advocate Dianne Medvec

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD - Tornado (Letters dated January 16, 2024)

Disp. Britani Corp	Disp. Val Holzheimer	Disp. Ashley Wayman
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Letter of Commendation

Sgt. Jonathon Smelcer	Sgt. Michael Fuduric	Ptl. Jeremy Calhoun
Ptl. Jeremy Epling	Ptl. Ryan Heramb	Ptl. Tyler Law
Ptl. Nicholas Luzius	Ptl. William Magnuson	Ptl. Corey Smith
Ptl. Donald Swindell	Det. Ryan Butler	Det. Matthew Jacob
Det. Brian Vernick	Det. Brian Yenkevich	

Department Excellence Award - ICAC Investigation (letter dated January 25, 2024)

Det. David Paulchel

Combat Cross - March 2024 - this award was presented to the officers by the Lake County Police Association at the March Meeting

Ptl. Charles Cox	Ptl. Anthony Haddad	Ptl. Brad Nicholson
Ptl. Shawn Wilson		

Jorge Median Distinguished Service Award - this award was presented at a Blue Coats Meeting on February 23, 2024

Ptl. Charles Cox	Ptl. Anthony Haddad	Ptl. Brad Nicholson
Ptl. Shawn Wilson		

Lake County Chiefs of Police Lifesaving Award (April)

Ptl. Benjamin Hildebrecht

Knights of Columbus/Blue Coat of the Year Award

Sgt. Steve Ondercin

Department Excellence Award –Serious Accident Investigation June 2024

Sgt. Michael Danzey

Letter of Commendation – Power Outage December 2024

Linda Hulderman

Historian

In late 2010, it was decided that the police department needed to make a special effort to preserve its history. The volunteer position of a Police Historian was created to document, record, and honor past officers and the history of the department. Sergeant Steve Ondercin has volunteered to be the Historian. In the spring of 2011 display cases crafted by the city road department woodshop were installed in the patrol hallway where officers passing them are reminded of the rich history of their department and the citizens that are served.

Donations were received from retired officers and others to preserve the past and honor those officers with some treasured photographs, memorabilia, and old equipment. Both display cases are filled, but their content is frequently getting updated. Since today is tomorrow's history, the department is constantly collecting items, especially photographs of officers and current equipment.



Mentor Police Victim Assistance Program

The Mentor Police Victim Assistance Program addresses the needs of crime victims in the cities of Mentor and Mentor on the Lake. Our program has served over 6,900 victims since its inception in 1997. A volunteer also provides clerical assistance to the program.

The goal of the program is to provide prompt, personalized services to citizens victimized by crime. Victims are provided written notifications regarding hearings and made aware of their rights as a victim. Victims are welcome to meet individually with the Advocate concerning their individual needs and concerns. Services may begin from the moment a victim makes a police report and continue through sentencing and probation. The Advocate is available to provide victims with court accompaniment, crisis intervention, complete explanation of the criminal court process, referrals to counselors and social service agencies, notification of court hearings, assistance in obtaining protection orders, notification and awareness of VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), obtaining restitution, and assistance in completing Victim Impact Statements, Victims of Crime Compensation applications and Victims' Rights Request Forms. Victims of Domestic Violence are provided with comprehensive services including safety planning, referrals, and information packets. Victims receiving services in 2024 ranged from age 9 through 83 years old. The Victim Advocate assists residents with safety concerns regardless of whether a police report is made, or crime is prosecuted.

The Mentor Victim Assistance Program served 212 Victims in 2024. Over 30% of all cases served in 2024 involved Domestic Violence. Given the complexity of domestic violence, these cases typically are provided the most extensive services including crisis intervention, safety planning, referrals, and no contact orders. It is not uncommon for the advocate to work with the same victim over a prolonged period to provide ongoing support and advocacy to enable the victim to leave the abusive relationship.

In addition to domestic violence, other crimes such as assault, sex offenses, menacing, burglary, robbery and theft are major areas of focus for the program. Additionally, the Victim Advocate contacts victims prior to arraignment for their input and to assess the need for No Contact Orders as bond and/or probation conditions then presents those recommendations to the court. In 2024, 122 No Contact Orders were initiated and processed by the Victim Advocate.

The Victim Advocate had an integral role in developing procedures to implement Marsy's Law for the Police Department and continues to provide extensive training to new hires and updates to officers regularly. In 2024, new procedures were implemented to improve victims' access to information regarding their rights.

In May 2024, the Victim Advocate collaborated with the Lake County Prosecutor's Victim Advocacy program and ADAMHS Board to present a workshop titled "Collaborating in a Crisis" based on our response to a mass shooting in Mentor in November 2023. This workshop was presented during the annual Ohio Attorney General's Two Days in May Conference in Columbus, Ohio. The workshop was presented to prosecutors, police officers, advocates, and social workers from across the state.

The program works in concert with the Mentor Municipal Court Judge, Mentor Prosecutor, Probation Officers, Lake County Victim Assistance Office and other law enforcement and community agencies such as Forbes House, Crossroads, and the ADAMHS Board in the best interests of all crime victims to provide quality services.

The Mentor Police Victim Assistance Office receives funding through a grant from the Victims of Crime Act. The program is conveniently located within the Mentor Police Department Building and can be reached at 440-205-2438.

Administration Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for the Community Services Unit, Court Services Unit, grant procurement and management, labor contract management, personnel, training, research and project management, and working with Public Works to manage the Department's fleet of vehicles.

Due to several recent retirements the department offered a police officer entrance exam in February 2024. The hiring process is a very detail oriented and involved endeavor and continued through the end of the year. As a result of the hiring process, ten officers were offered and accepted positions as police officers. They were sworn into the position in August 2024. Six started the Cuyahoga



Community College police academy and are due to graduate in February 2025. The other four new officers immediately started in-house and field training.

In addition to the ten new officers, a promotional exam was offered in 2024 for the rank of sergeant. Two patrolmen were promoted to Sergeant in 2024 with a third to be sworn in January 2025. Each new sergeant is assigned a mentor, another supervisor, to assist with the new challenges that accompany promotion. Additionally, each new sergeant is sent to a two-week first line supervision school to give them the foundation to be a supervisor.

Court Services

The Court Liaison Officer, a sworn Mentor Police Officer, is responsible for the security and safety of the Mentor Municipal Court. The position is filled with one full-time and two part-time sworn Mentor police officers. This format allows complete coverage throughout the year. There are also two additional part-time officers (unarmed) that manage the front door of the Court and Police Department entrance. They make sure all persons entering have business with these areas and are scanned for weapons, contraband, etc.

The Court Officer performed daily security checks of the courtrooms, all offices, hallways, stairwells, and outer perimeters. Panic alarms were tested monthly, and the results documented. The Court Officer discussed and reviewed safety and security issues with the bailiffs and the front door officers.

The Court Officer ensured timely delivery of any official documents to and from the Courts including criminal complaints, arrest reports, traffic citations, warrants, jail commits, and subpoenas. An additional duty included transporting prisoners between the Mentor Court and Lake County jail. This took place at least once daily.

Community Service Unit

At the Mentor Police Department, community engagement is a shared responsibility. Every officer fulfills the role of a community service officer through their daily duties and interactions with the public. The dedicated Community Service Unit (CSU) enhances this mission by fostering positive relationships and promoting safety through educational programs and ongoing outreach.



The CSU is an active member of the county-wide Safe Communities Coalition, collaborating with officers from various police and fire departments across Lake County. This coalition, which includes representatives from organizations such as the Lake County General Health District, Ohio Traffic Safety Office, ODOT, the Council on Aging, the ADAMHS Board, Crossroads, and MADD, meets regularly to plan events and improve community safety.

In 2024, Officer Dan Radigan joined the CSU following the retirement of Officer Scott Bell. Additionally, Tracey Woodward, the department's civilian Crime Prevention Specialist, transitioned from a part-time to a full-time position, further bolstering the unit's capabilities.

The CSU actively engages in a variety of safety and community-building events. These include long-standing programs like the third-grade seatbelt program and poster contest, educating students at Mentor's nine elementary schools about the importance of seatbelt safety. Other initiatives include the "Buckle Down" campaign, Safety Town, National Night Out, Homecoming and Prom Blitzes, the Protect and Serve Tavern, and the Department Open House, all aimed at fostering safety awareness and community connections.



In 2024, the CSU launched the "Hide the Treasure" program, designed to unite the community and promote engagement during the summer months. Each week, a "treasure" was hidden in a public park or space, with a photo hint shared on Facebook and Instagram to guide participants. Residents joined the fun by searching for the treasure and submitting a photo of themselves with their find, along with its location. The CSU shared these photos on social media, highlighting the park or area in Mentor where the treasure was discovered. This creative initiative not only encouraged community interaction but also

showcased the city's scenic spaces while inspiring excitement and exploration among residents.

The CSU launched the inaugural Junior Police Academy, welcoming 24 recruits for an intensive, week-long program. Participants gained foundational knowledge of law enforcement while enhancing their teamwork and social skills. Academy activities included defensive tactics, mock crime scene investigations, K9 demonstrations, physical training, evidence processing, CPR and First Aid, fingerprinting, SWAT demonstrations, and traffic stop scenarios.



The CSU also led safety demonstrations at local high schools, focusing on distracted and impaired driving. The annual "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign, co-sponsored with the Lake County Crime Prevention Task Force, highlighted the dangers of impaired driving. This year's event was held at the Painesville Speedway.

Child safety is another cornerstone of the CSU's efforts. Officer Radigan became a certified Child Safety Seat Technician, joining Tracey Woodward in conducting child seat

inspections and installations. In 2024, the unit checked 65 car seats, with over 90% initially installed incorrectly.



The department also promotes helmet safety through an affordable bicycle helmet program, fitting and selling 38 helmets in 2024. Additionally, the Helmet Safety Citation program rewarded children for wearing helmets and practicing safe riding. Officers issued 109 citations, with Officer Hatch recognized as the top citation writer for the fourth consecutive year.

The CSU oversees the department's school crossing guard program, ensuring the safety of students in high-traffic areas. This year, three guards and a newly trained substitute ensured a flawless safety record across four elementary schools.

Beyond these initiatives, the CSU participated in parades, Shop with a Kop, the Kops and Kids Christmas Party, National Walk to School Day, and safety talks at daycares, nursing homes, and the Mentor Chamber of Commerce.

In 2024, the Community Service Unit remained committed to enhancing safety, building trust, and fostering meaningful relationships throughout Mentor and Lake County.

Personnel and Training Unit

The personnel and training unit for the Mentor Police Department had been managed by Roseann Bandelow since 1999. She dedicated her heart and time to the department while scheduling trainings and coordinating the hiring process. Roseann retired on May 31, 2024, after 25 years with the Mentor Police Department. Elizabeth Gorter was designated as Roseann's replacement on June 1, 2024. Having been with the department nine years, the transition was seamless as Elizabeth started her new role.

Throughout 2024, the Mentor Police Department swore in 11 new officers. One officer attended the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP) basic police academy and graduated July 2024. Six officers started their basic police academy at Cuyahoga Community College (TRI-C) and are due to graduate in March 2025. The remaining four officers started their field training upon being sworn in. The department had five retirements in 2024. Three Sergeants, one with over 34 years of service, one with 33 years of service, and one with 23 years of service and two officers one with 19 years of service and one with 17 years of service.

As the largest municipal police department in Lake County, the Mentor Police Department strives to provide all officers with the tools they need to set the department above all others in the area. Our commitment to training keeps our police department on the cutting

edge of police professionalism. Training is required for basic police functions as well as for all specialized units for the officers to safely meet every aspect of the job.

During 2024 the department scheduled sworn officers and civilian employees to attend in house and off-site trainings. The Chief attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police Annual Training Conference. Our Captains each attended trainings specific to their specialties such as Bomb Squad and Drone. One Sergeant attended the FBI Executive Commander Supervisor Leadership Institute Trilogy. Two patrolmen were promoted to sergeant, and both attended the Northwestern University *Supervision of Police Personnel* two-week training.

Officers from the Patrol Division completed various trainings such as: Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE), Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), Street Survival, Peer Support Training through Crossroads Health, and Basic at Scene Accident Training. The department attended Mass Casualty Training with the Lake County Sheriff's Office. The department also conducted in-house Tactical Medic Training.

The department added four Field Training Officers (FTO) and two Hostage Negotiators (HNT), all of whom attended the required trainings for their specialty. Four SWAT team members attended the annual Ohio Tactical Officers Association conference. Three Hostage Negotiator members attended the annual HNT conference, and our school resource officer (SRO) attended the annual SRO conference. One officer was selected for the Drug Recognition Expert School (DRE) and completed two separate week-long off-site trainings for his certification. The Detectives continued to receive training in several areas specifically suited to their specialized areas such as ICAC webinars which focuses on crimes against children involving the internet.

Each year, the Ohio Peace Officers Training Council (OPOTC) requires statewide Continuing Professional Training (CPT). For 2024, OPOTC required 24 hours of specific topics of training. The Mentor Police Department hosted two sessions for their officers and officers from outside agencies. We also sent officers to other host agencies to complete their CPT training requirements.

The dispatch supervisor attended several trainings pertaining to updates for the 911 system used. The Record's Department completed Basic and Advanced Public Records training with legal updates. Two corrections officers attended training for the intoxilyzer machine. The victim advocate attended the annual Ohio Victims Advocate Conference. A department chaplain attended the annual international police chaplain conference.

Range and Defensive Tactics

The Police Department continued its very active range program in 2024. This program is traditionally run twice each month in conjunction with the Defensive Tactics program.

There were several range courses designed to not only simulate real world scenarios, but to also keep officers proficient with their duty weapons. Range exercises included work on tactical shooting, precision shooting, room clearing, as well as all required firearm qualification.

There are currently seven range officers in the department. Having this number of qualified range officers allows for more flexibility in scheduling and training options. Each brings a unique element to the Range Program, though all are committed to improving the firearm capabilities of our officers.

Field Training Officer (FTO) Program



The Mentor Police Department Field Training Officer program consists of three weeks of “in house” training and fourteen weeks of “on the road” training. During that time, the new officer will have three different training officers and work both day shift and night shifts. Once a new officer completes the program they are cleared to begin working as a one-man unit.

We currently have sixteen training officers in the Patrol Division. Officers Hatch, Berkheimer, and Trader were added as training officers in 2024. Sgt. Ondercin took over the program at the end of 2024 due to Sgt. Kloski’s retirement.

The training officers are expected to train the new officers in everything from department forms, laws of arrest, building searches and everything in between. They document everything they do and test the new hires regularly. They really are the backbone of the department.

We had a total of five new officers go through the FTO program in 2024. Officers Bradshaw, Carney, McLean, Gefert, and Schmitt all successfully completed the program. Once a month, the training officer and trainee meet with Sgt. Ondercin and Lt Molnar to make sure training is progressing and everything is “on track”.

Six officers are scheduled to graduate the Police Academy in March 2025 and will start the FTO program soon thereafter.

Operations Division

The Operations Division is at the center of the Police Department. Both the Patrol Bureau and the Detective Bureau fall under the Operations Division. The patrol officers are responsible for handling all calls for service, taking initial reports of crime, completing investigations, enforcing traffic violations, and providing a safe environment for our residents and businesses. The Detective Bureau is responsible for investigating more

serious crimes, crimes that are more complex, or crimes requiring investigation outside of the city. Our narcotics unit is part of the Detective Bureau as well. The Detective Bureau provides valuable support to the Patrol Division with various investigative tools. Each unit has its own objectives and responsibilities to provide effective and efficient delivery of police services which is the overall goal of the Operations Division.

The main goals of our patrol division are to provide exceptional service and to ensure the safety of our residents and businesses. Our patrol officers engage with the community while providing security at city events such as the Mentor Rocks Concert Series, Tunes at the Lagoons, City Fest, and other smaller city sponsored events. We are happy to report that we were able to provide a safe environment for all these events. Our officers enjoying meeting the community at these events and we appreciate the strong support the residents show for the police department.

Patrol Bureau

Officers assigned to the patrol bureau work 12-hour shifts and are assigned daily to various parts of the city. The Mentor Police Department had five retirements, and three officers resign during 2024. The department hired 11 officers in 2024. Five of them successfully completed their training program and our patrolling on their own. Six of them are currently in the Basic Police Academy at Cuyahoga Community College and will graduate in March 2025. Recruitment and retention were a struggle heading into 2024, but we are very happy that we were able to hire a good group of officers in 2024. They will make a big difference in our staffing levels in 2025.

Policing continues to evolve with advancements in technology. We continue to use these advancements to help investigate and solve crime. Our FLOCK license plate reader cameras, stationed throughout the city, help locate suspects and wanted persons on a regular basis. With the help of the FLOCK cameras we made 113 arrests, recovered eight stolen autos, and located five missing persons. Citizens help us tremendously by identifying suspected criminals on Facebook and providing us with other valuable tips.



In addition to normal patrol duties, patrol officers will at times conduct special details including warrant service, targeted traffic enforcement, and aggressive criminal enforcement in higher crime areas. To help make our roads safe for our citizens, students and motoring public, our officers are detailed to school zones and speed enforcement on SR 2. We also conduct a Porch Pirate program around the holiday season to help deter the theft of packages. We continue to work closely with Mentor Public Schools to combat passing school bus violations.

The Mentor Police Department has a good working relationship with the other Lake County police agencies. Several of our officers participated in County wide Mass Casualty Incident Training during the summer. This training ensures all Lake County police agencies have a similar response to a mass casualty incident.

Reported crimes in the city remain relatively consistent year to year. Adult arrests dropped 40% this year. This is a direct result of the legalization of marijuana. Our drug arrests were down 64% compared to last year. This also had an affect on our weapons offenses which were down 17%. Motor Vehicle thefts rose in 2024 from 16 in 2023 to 26 in 2024. Violent crime remains very low in the city. There were no homicides in 2024. Our patrol division investigated a wide assortment of calls including sex offenses, aggravated robbery, felonious assault, burglary, as well as numerous other crimes and calls for service.

The call activity in the department was down 2.4% compared to 2023. Although there was a slight decrease in traffic citations, written warnings rose by 9% as compared in 2023. Thefts and drug offenses were again the leading arrest categories.

Traffic enforcement is a major function of the patrol division with goal of reducing accidents. Accidents were down by 2% in 2024. The Mentor Police Department actively participated in three State of Ohio Department of Public Safety sponsored traffic enforcement programs: "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over", "What's Holding You Back," and "Click it or Ticket." OVI arrests have been on the decline, as it seems more people are utilizing ride share services after drinking.

	2023	2024	Difference	Percent Change
Calls for Service	20,745	20,244	-501	-2.4%
Criminal Offenses	1,791	1,408	-383	-21%
Adult Arrests	1,103	663	-440	-40%
OVI	156	113	- 43	-27%
Total On-Street Accidents	1,146	1,125	-21	-1.8%
Total Injury Accidents	271	267	-4	1.4%
Traffic Citations	4,952	4,868	-84	-1.7%
Written Warnings	1,490	1,627	137	9%

Traffic Services

One of the many responsibilities of the Mentor Police Department is enforcing traffic laws. Throughout the year, patrol officers are expected to address traffic violations to promote good driving habits and lower the number of accidents that occur in the city. Ultimately, the goal is public safety. There are times when specific traffic complaints are reported and forwarded to the dayshift Lieutenant.

There were sixty-nine specific complaints received through various channels in 2024. Most came directly from citizens. The most common complaint was speeding vehicles. Fourteen of those complaints were assigned selective enforcement. Selective enforcement is a program where officers are assigned specific areas of the city during their shift. The others were handled by deployment of the speed trailers or passed on to patrol officers during roll call.



The traffic calming program ran from April 1st through December 8th, 2024. Select locations were designated in residential areas based on complaints. The City Public Works Department assisted in the traffic calming program by posting signs at targeted locations. The

program was divided into six-week segments with each ward having a designated street. Patrol officers conducted traffic enforcement activities at each location throughout the year.

The department was awarded \$63,215.50 in federal traffic safety funding in October 2023. This was part of a grant through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It was used to pay officers to aggressively enforce traffic laws with an emphasis on OVI, speed, distracted driving, and seatbelt violations. The goal of the grant is to promote safe streets and to reduce fatalities. The grant continued through the end of September 2024.

Traffic law enforcement will continue to be a priority with the Mentor Police Department patrol division to promote safe driving habits and reduce accidents.

Special Events



The Mentor Police Department provided security at over 25 events during the summer of 2024. This included 16 concerts at the Amphitheater, including three national acts. We also provided security at Tunes at the Lagoons, City Fest, 4th of July Fireworks, Mentor Cruise-In, as well as making checks at over 10 other City sponsored recreational events. We utilized a variety of tools including, drones, a surveillance trailer camera, bikes, K9 and ATVs to enhance our

security at these large gatherings. Our officers enjoyed interacting with the community during these family events. Most importantly we are proud to report we had no major incidents at any of these community celebrations and were able to provide a safe environment for all those that attended the events.

Criminal Investigations Bureau

The Mentor Police Department Detective Bureau consists of a Detective Lieutenant, a Detective Sergeant, six general duty detectives, one narcotics investigator, one juvenile detective, one school resource officer, and a secretary. The Detective Bureau was down two detectives this year (one narcotics detective and one general duty detective). The Detective Lieutenant and Detective Sergeant are responsible for the administration of the Detective Bureau, management of the Narcotics Unit, Internal Affairs investigations, the Evidence Technician program, the Video Forensic program, the Computer Forensic program, the detective assigned to the U.S. Marshals Task Force, the detective assigned to the FBI Midwestern Crypto currency Task Force, the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the School Resource Officer program, and the overall management of all investigations assigned to the Detective Bureau.

Training for detectives and evidence technicians is a priority for the Mentor Police Department. Detectives continued to participate in the annual Ohio Identification Officers Association training. The three-day conference covered training in multiple investigative disciplines. Two detectives received training in court testimony. One detective completed several training classes related to child exploitation investigations. Those courses included studies in emerging technologies, internet investigations, and courses hosted by the Internet Crimes Against Children organization. One detective completed a course in advanced crypto currency investigations. The narcotics detective completed a training summit hosted by the Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center.

Detectives were responsible for follow-up on all assigned cases until the case can be cleared or satisfactorily closed. Detectives are also encouraged to self-initiate investigations from information developed by other means such as civilian contacts, confidential informants, and referrals from other agencies. Detectives are responsible for assisting and supporting the patrol division with investigations when the need arises. One key responsibility of the detective bureau is conducting background investigations for new police candidates, corrections officers, and dispatchers. The hiring of new officers meant dozens of background investigations had to be completed to get the list to cut down to the final list of candidates.

The Detective Bureau utilizes social media to keep citizens informed of important information and as an aid in their investigations. Several cases have been solved by citizen tips received after a video or photograph has been posted to Facebook asking for

assistance in identifying a person. The detective bureau continues to work with multiple criminal justice agencies on the local, state, and federal levels, to be proactive in its crime fighting efforts.

Computer / Cell Phone Forensics Unit

This unit forensically processes phones, computers, and other electronic devices to obtain evidence of crimes. The crimes can include child pornography, soliciting minors for sex, drug trafficking, and other situations where electronic images, communication, or data provide evidence of a crime. The department has a detective assigned to work with the United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force for training and assistance with examinations. In 2024, this detective conducted 71 electronic device examinations related to crimes in Mentor and in other jurisdictions within Lake County.

Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force



The Detective Bureau has one investigator assigned to receive complaints generated by the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. This task force supports the prosecution of offenders disseminating or receiving prohibited child sexual abuse materials.

This detective investigated 16 complaints from ICAC in 2024. This is more than double the number of child exploitation cases from 2023. These cyber tips all contained information about IP addresses located in Mentor where child pornography was being saved or shared over the internet. The investigations led to the execution of three search warrants on homes in Mentor, and 29 search warrants for accounts and devices. ICAC provides the funding for our department to use Griffeye Analyze DI Pro software to assist with searching electronics for evidence of child sexual abuse material.

Video Forensic Unit

This Unit consists of two detectives who process and enhance video and images from various sources. The unit uses a Video Forensic Computer system utilizing Avid and Input Ace software. Video projects are used in identifying suspects and aid in their successful prosecution. This system allows for enhanced still photos captured from videos to be distributed to media outlets and other law enforcement agencies. All the suspects identified through social media tips in 2024 were through still images captured with this software. In 2024, the unit processed 64 forensic video requests and placed all usable images on social media to seek help from the public in identifying a suspect.

School Resource Officer (SRO)

The SRO is assigned to the Detective Bureau and works at the Mentor High School interacting with the students, faculty, and school administration. He provides a law enforcement resource that students can approach for information, guidance, or help. The SRO is responsible for investigating crimes and complaints that are committed on school property and makes arrests when appropriate. He also assists in enforcing school rules and guidelines. The SRO also occasionally teaches classes that are law enforcement related and aids in seeing that school rules and guidelines are followed. The SRO handled 10 investigations that resulted in 2 arrests. The SRO attended the School Resource Officer conference, legal updates, and School Threat Assessment training. He also assists with Safety Town during the summer months. Safety Town teaches young children basic safety skills such as stranger awareness, fire prevention, and traffic rules.



Narcotics Unit

The Mentor Police Department Narcotics Unit investigated criminal drug offenses in Mentor and around Lake County. These investigations were initiated as the result of drug transactions that were directly observed by detectives, tips called in to police, information gathered from the use of confidential informants, and reports of drug thefts made to police. Detectives worked throughout the year on drug cases with agents from the Lake County Narcotics Agency. The detectives also trained new patrol officers in basic drug investigations and search and seizure law as it related to drug offenses.

As part of their duties, the detectives were responsible for handling vehicle forfeitures that resulted from drug arrests and OVI cases. A total of 5 vehicles were seized in 2024. Detectives were also tasked with investigating drug overdose deaths. In 2024, through investigation of these overdose cases, detectives were able to arrest three different drug dealers in three different cases for providing the drugs that the victims overdosed on.

Arson Investigation

The Mentor Police Department Detective Bureau has one detective assigned and trained to assist the Mentor Fire Department with arson investigations. This detective works with investigators from the fire department to collect evidence at the fire scene. There were two arson investigations in 2024. While both cases were investigated as suspicious and possibly arson related, they were later determined not to be arson.

U.S. Marshals Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force

The Detective Bureau continued to have one Detective assigned to the U.S. Marshals Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force in 2024. The Mentor Detective assigned to the Task Force assists with tracking down violent felons who are wanted from Mentor and the surrounding counties. This detective also received additional training in field trauma and search tactics as a member of this Task Force. During the Detective's service with the task force this year, 58 people were taken into custody for warrants. This number included 19 of our own Mentor warrants.

Volunteer Police Chaplain Program

The program was formally instituted in February of 2009. The current members are Rev. Stoney Drain, Fr. Timothy Plavac, and Rev. Scott Kennedy.

This program has played a crucial role this past year in providing emotional support and spiritual support via in-house and community engagements. The Chaplains continued to make their services available by way of counseling, assisting with death notifications, callouts to community members as requested by the police department, funeral services, ride-alongs, Kops-N-Kids events, 54 dinners for officers, and department gatherings. The Chaplains, combined, volunteered over 205 hours in 2024. The Chaplains program continues to thrive as much of their volunteer time goes to individual time with officers. Over the past year the chaplains have made a significant impact of the well-being of the Mentor Police Officers and our community. Their dedication has helped foster promoting mental health and fostering positive relationships between our department and the public. In addition, the Chaplains donated approximately \$241.31 to the men and women of the police department for dinners, \$126.13 for food and candy, and \$61.18 for gifts for the officers.

Cryptocurrency Task Force

The Detective Bureau assigned one detective on a part time basis to the Midwestern Cryptocurrency Task Force. The task force is run by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and targets financial fraud which utilize cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin. This detective investigated a total of 16 cases involving the illicit use of cryptocurrency. Nine of these cases were from Mentor. In most of these cryptocurrency scams, the victims were tricked into sending US funds through various cryptocurrency retailers. These funds are difficult to track as they get moved to other digital wallets and accounts, mixed with other funds, and moved multiple more times to mask the destination of the funds. There were several significant cases investigated in 2024. One involved the investigation into a theft of over \$377,000 through a Bitcoin transaction. The total amount in the 16 cases investigated by the MPD detective assigned to the Cryptocurrency task force was \$993,383.21. The amount recovered through investigation totaled \$415,550.00, a 43% recovery rate.

Evidence Technicians

The Mentor Police Department Evidence Technician Program consists of 24 patrol officers, 1 School Resource Officer, and all 8 of the detectives in the Detective Bureau. Their duties include photographing and collecting evidence. The photographs they take are of both crime scenes and victims of crimes. The evidence they collect includes fingerprints, tool marks and impressions, shoe and tire prints, DNA, and trace evidence, such as hairs and fibers, left at the crime scene. Their work also includes collecting evidence at the scene of traffic crashes. Evidence Technicians processed 1,107 cases in 2024.



When serious motor vehicle crashes occur, Evidence Technicians assist the reporting officer and Accident Investigation Unit by photographing the marks left on the roadway and the damage to the vehicles. Detectives draft affidavits for records requests and search warrants. In addition to writing search warrants, detectives also process search

warrants/consent searches of homes and businesses to collect evidence relating to their investigations. Evidence Technicians took 11,661 digital photographs of evidence in 2024.

Both the Detective Bureau and Evidence Technicians processed numerous crime scenes to collect evidence in 2024. One example of this occurred in November, when evidence was collected at the scene of an overnight breaking and entering that occurred at a local jewelry store, where hundreds of thousands of dollars of jewelry was stolen.

A large part of a detective's job is writing and executing search warrants. These warrants can be for locations, the DNA of a suspect, devices, such as cell phones and computers, and on accounts for websites and computer applications. In 2024, detectives completed and executed a total of 93 search warrants. Three of those search warrants were at physical locations for either pandering or child pornography investigations. The rest of the search warrants were for digital accounts, cell phones, computer, or DNA.

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Case Load

In 2024, the Detective Bureau investigated a total of 275 cases. Through their investigations, detectives cleared 61 cases by arrest. These arrests were for crimes ranging from theft to aggravated assault and weapons charges. They closed an additional 135 cases as pending and 76 cases remain open and are still being actively investigated. The remaining 3 cases were either exceptionally cleared, meaning the victims in these cases no longer wanted to pursue criminal charges, or the complaint turned out to be

unfounded. The investigations involved a variety of cases including aggravated assault, felonious assault, financial crimes, theft offenses, sexual assault, narcotics trafficking, overdose deaths, weapons offenses, child pornography, and missing persons. Detectives use a variety of tools to solve their cases. The police department continues to use the FLOCK camera system. These cameras are placed in a variety of locations throughout the city to run license plates on passing vehicles. Detectives can use the data to show when and where a suspect vehicle was in the city, which has become valuable in connecting crimes to specific suspects.

Specialty Units

Accident Investigation Unit



The Mentor Police Department's Accident Investigation Unit (AIU) consists of four members who have advanced training in crash investigation. Two members are Crash Reconstructionists, and all four are Evidence Technicians. The members of the Mentor Police AIU also serve on the Lake Regional Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU).

Ptl. Ben Hildebrecht joined the team in January 2024, and he attended a Basic Crash Investigation school. Ptl. Hildebrecht will continue to attend advanced training course in the coming years. In addition, all AIU members attended monthly training at MPD.

In 2024, Mentor's AIU assisted in the investigation of 18 cases, including mutual aid to the Lake CRU. Among these cases were six fatalities, seven motorcycle crashes, five Aggravated Vehicular Assaults, and one Aggravated Vehicular Homicide. Seven cases were alcohol/drug related.

Bike/ATV Unit

The MPD Bike Unit is comprised of one supervisor and eight officers. The ATV Unit is comprised of one supervisor and five officers. Both Units were assigned to events in 2024. These events included the 4th of July celebration, the Torch Run, Mentor Rocks Concert Series, Tunes at the Lagoons, and Mentor City Fest. The side-by-side was used for these special events and continues to be a great high visibility public relations tool. The side-by-side and ATV Unit were utilized by the City of Mentor's Wildlife Management Team as well. Both the Bike Unit and the ATV Unit continue to make a positive impact on community.

Bomb Squad

The Lake County Bomb Squad continued its tradition of providing excellent response to and coverage of incidents involving hazardous materials and devices in Lake, Geauga, and Ashtabula counties. The squad was formed in 1992. Since that time, we have trained and gotten equipment to be able to respond to a wide array of hazardous incidents. The squad is recognized as an Accredited Public Safety Bomb Squad by the FBI and the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board.

The team consists of four bomb technicians, one explosive detecting K9 team, and one paramedic. We also had one officer join the team to become a certified bomb technician. He is scheduled for his certification course in early 2025. The team members were from five area agencies: Mentor Police Department, Concord Township Fire Department, Eastlake Police Department, Painesville Police Department, and the Geauga County Sheriff's Department. We continued our partnership with University Hospitals. UH will send a squad and paramedics on all bomb squad responses. This will allow for on-scene rescue squad and medical personnel who are familiar with our gear and processes should the need arise.



The team trains twice each month to ensure continued familiarity with equipment and methods introduced by the FBI and ATF. The FBI coordinated several advanced courses in the Cleveland area for local bomb squads. This afforded our bomb squad members the opportunity to learn new techniques and discuss trends with other squads from the area. Two team members are on a task force with the FBI to respond to radiological or nuclear hazardous incidents across northern Ohio.



The bomb squad is required to submit incident reports to the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. This system tracks all bomb squad activities and incidents to allow for trends to be identified and communication between squads to be simplified. During the year our bomb squad was utilized 58 times. Examples of incidents to which the squad responded include: two explosions, improvised explosive devices, recovery of bomb making materials, suspicious packages, recovery of munitions, military ordnance, and recovery of improvised explosives, among others. Each incident presented a unique challenge for the squad. Fortunately, there were no injuries to team members or accidents related to the calls.

In conclusion, the Lake County Bomb Squad has provided a necessary, important service to the residents of Lake, Geauga, and Ashtabula Counties for over 30 years. In light of

the ever-present risk of attacks by foreign and domestic terrorists, the Squad has proven to be a valuable asset to our community and to the various cities within the three-county region. Continued operation and support are essential to the safety and well-being of the citizens of the City of Mentor and the region.

Drone Unit

The Mentor Drone Team supports the Police Department's Operations Division. The drone team's mission is to provide an aerial perspective for police officers or fire fighters, to gather usable intelligence during critical incidents and investigations, while keeping first responders and the public safe. Drones have proven to be extremely effective in search and rescue operations, dangerous subject apprehension, interior searches, hazardous material and dangerous ordnance identification, crime scene mapping, accident reconstruction, fire investigations, large event security, and night-time operations.



The Mentor Police Department has utilized drones since 2018, working with the Lake County Public Safety UAS Team. Due to the ever-growing demand for drones in public safety, along with more affordable drones, the Mentor Police Department began its own drone team in 2023. Having more available pilots and mission ready drones at hand allows for a quicker response and resolution to various emergency situations. The Mentor

Drone Team still works closely with the Lake County UAS Team supporting public safety across Lake County.

The Mentor Police Drone Team consists of five pilots, each possessing an FAA "Small UAS" certification. The department's drones have various capabilities to include high-definition zoom, thermal imaging, droppable payload, search lights and image recording. Our drone pilots go through a variety of training to include FAA laws and regulations, flight operations using various drones, indoor searches, search and rescue techniques, and geo-spatial imagery.



In 2024, the Mentor Drone Team was called for support at fifteen incidents. These included searches for missing and suicidal persons, tactical oversight, fleeing subjects,

evidence recovery, fire scene mapping, and accident reconstruction. In addition to these incidents, the drone team assisted with security overwatch at the Mentor Amphitheater concerts. By maintaining a high-level overview at events, the drones supplement patrol with the ability to detect problems as they arise.

The Mentor Drone Team enjoyed the opportunity to educate students at Shore Middle School's 'Flight and Space' class on the use of drones in public safety. Additionally, the team was welcomed by young cadets at the MPD Junior Police Academy. In both cases, these students had the opportunity to check out the latest drone technology first-hand and see what the drones could do.

The Mentor Drone Team respects the rights of all citizens and follows all laws and regulations regarding privacy.



K-9 Unit

The Mentor Police K-9 Unit continued to be an essential asset to the Mentor Police Department in 2024. Our two teams consist of Ptl. Mackey with K-9 Bak and Ptl. Wurgler with K-9 Achilles. The K-9 teams perform a wide array of duties throughout the year not only in Mentor, but also assist surrounding law enforcement agencies.

The primary responsibilities of the K-9 teams are criminal enforcement and community relations. The K-9 duties specifically entail patrol, apprehension, drug detection and interdiction, tracking, and article and building searches. The teams attend special events as well. In 2024, the K-9's participated in included the 4th of July, City Fest, Mentor Rocks, Humane Society Mutt Strut, the Torch Run for Special Olympics, and the Kops and Kids Christmas party. They also routinely visit local schools and businesses.

In 2024, the teams performed 72 K-9 uses for the Mentor Police Department and 23 assists to other law enforcement agencies. These included seven suspect controls and apprehensions, 36 assists to officers, three article or area searches, four subject tracks, and 31 narcotics searches. The teams were directly responsible for or assisted with seven misdemeanor arrests and 10 felony arrests.

The K-9 handlers trained for a total of well over 300 hours in 2024. Both teams recertified with the State of Ohio in April.

The support for the K-9 Unit from the Mentor community continued in 2024 with several businesses and residents offering support in the form of services, supplies, food, and monetary donations. The K-9 program received an endowment of \$250,000 to be used

for the future of the program! PetSmart continued to donate food for the teams, and the Lakeshore Animal Hospital continued to donate health care



We unfortunately lost Mentor K9 Achilles on August 18, 2024, due to a sudden medical emergency. The City of Mentor held a Memorial Service for Achilles on September 17, 2024, at the Mentor Safety Forces Memorial. K9 Achilles served Mentor Police for five years of exceptional service alongside his handler, Ptl. Wurgler. He will not be forgotten.

We look forward to continued success with our K-9 program. The department plans on adding a new K9 in 2025.

Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT)

The Hostage Negotiation Team (HNT) is a unit within the Mentor Police Department that has been trained to handle communications in crisis and hostage situations. The primary goal of the HNT in any crisis is the preservation of life and the peaceful resolution of the crisis through open communication and negotiation, thereby minimizing the need for the use of force. All six of the team members are trained as Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officers.

During crisis situations, the HNT is under the control of the scene commander and works alongside patrol officers, SWAT team members, bomb disposal officers, and/or other specialized units. The HNT is called upon to communicate primarily with suicidal, armed, and/or barricaded subjects.

The team met four times for training throughout the year. We continued to familiarize ourselves with our newer equipment. This year we sent three team members to the yearly Midwest Crisis Negotiator Conference in Columbus.

We were excited to announce the addition of two new team members. The applicants went through a panel interview composed of a current team member, a member of the department administration, and a negotiator from an outside agency. The two new members this year attended the required basic negotiator training through the FBI Cleveland Office.

A goal for 2025 is to replace an additional member, due to a member resigning from the team. We also like to have the two newest members attend the Advanced Negotiator Training Seminar this year.

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)

In 2024, the Mentor Police Department SWAT team continued to provide tactical law enforcement support for the City of Mentor and Lake County.

The team held monthly training to stay proficient and up to date on their skills. Several of these training sessions were conducted with the Lake County Sheriff's Office SWAT team, where exercises including building searches, room entry, open area searches, and marksmanship were conducted.



In January, the SWAT team was activated to assist the Mentor Police Detective Bureau with a search warrant related to a criminal investigation at a home in Mentor. The team was able to safely remove the occupants of the home and clear it of any dangers before turning the scene over to detectives.

In June, four team members attended the annual Ohio Tactical Officers Association Conference in Sandusky, Ohio. During the week-long conference, these team members received comprehensive instruction on numerous legal, tactical, and real-world law enforcement topics. This training was then brought back and taught to the entire SWAT team, enhancing the team's capabilities.

The Mentor SWAT team is currently comprised of sixteen officers from the Mentor and Kirtland Hills Police Departments.

Support Services

The Support Services Division of the Mentor Police Department is comprised of the Safety Forces Communications Unit (Dispatch), Corrections Unit (Jail), Records Unit, and Property & Evidence Unit. Under the command of Captain Robert Valley, the dedicated men and women of these units provide a strong supporting cast to the Operations Division. Each of these units is vital to the successful operations of the police department, and their level of service reflects the mission of the Mentor Police Department. With the ever-changing legal mandates related to these disciplines, continuing professional

training allows them to meet or exceed strict state and federal guidelines, or ‘Best Practices’ related to their responsibilities.

The Support Services Division is responsible for the preparation and management of the police department’s budget. Starting in September, the Support Services Commander plans for the following year’s budget. Departmental needs and special purchases are evaluated and considered. Once approved by the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Council, the budget goes into effect on January 1st. The police department budget is broken down by units, to include Administration, Patrol, Detective Bureau, Corrections, Records, Communications, Victim’s Assistance, and Crime Prevention. Within those units, budget amounts are set for personnel, equipment, supplies, services, training, and others. Throughout the budget year, the Support Services Commander approves or denies purchases to ensure fiscal responsibility through the end of the budget cycle.

The Support Services Division is responsible for the overall condition and cleanliness of our police facilities. In 2024, we continued to make necessary facility upgrades. Managed by Public Works, the police facility foundation was resealed to address leaks to the lower-level offices. The Detective Bureau supervisors’ office was renovated to include new carpet, paint, and furniture. We began renovations to the second-floor administrative area.



This project included the removal of old wallpaper, paint, new ceiling tiles and lighting, and a bathroom renovation. We continue to consider cost-effective upgrades to our aging police facility.

Mentor Police - Naloxone Program					
Program Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of MPD Responses to Opioid Overdoses	36	16	16	13	7
Total Doses of Naloxone Administered	59	43	30	20	12
Average Naloxone Doses per Overdose	1.6	2.7	1.9	1.5	1.7

The Support Services Division manages the departments Naloxone (Narcan) Program. We ensure that each officer has a supply of naloxone on hand to respond to opioid overdoses. Since the program’s inception in 2015, a documented 194 lives

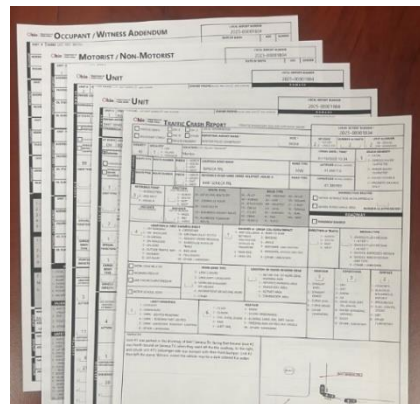
have been saved by Mentor Officers using naloxone to reverse the effects of opioid overdoses. As illicit drug abuse trends change, we have witnessed lower number of opioid overdoses in Mentor, but this remains to be an issue. Mentor Police Officers

responded to 7opioid overdoses in 2024, saving 5 lives. The Mentor Police Department will continue efforts to combat opioid addiction and overdoses.

The Support Services Division also manages the department's Flock Safety ALPR Camera System. Mentor PD began using the Flock system in 2021 with 14 cameras, with immediate results. As 14 cameras could not encompass all ingress and egress routes to and from Mentor, and larger retail districts, an additional 15 cameras were added to our inventory. Statistics show that 2024 has been the most successful year in terms of results from Flock. In 2024, officers utilized the Flock system 176 times. This resulted in 113 arrests, 86 warrant arrests, 5 missing or endangered persons located, 10 drug arrests, 4 weapons arrests, and the system being used 64 times to identify and locate suspects. The City of Mentor is under contract with Flock through 2028.

Records Department

The Records Unit is the central repository for all records produced and/or received by the Police Department, with the responsibility to merge, securely store, and produce records as required by our judicial partners or through public record requests. To manage the vast number of records produced by the police department, we utilize both a paper filing system and New World Systems Law Enforcement Records Management Software. This software provides us the ability to serve our citizens and law enforcement partners by quickly locating and accessing various records. Records software aids in limiting the amount of paper filing to only those paper documents required by our records retention schedule. Records software also allows officers to query records which aid in investigations.



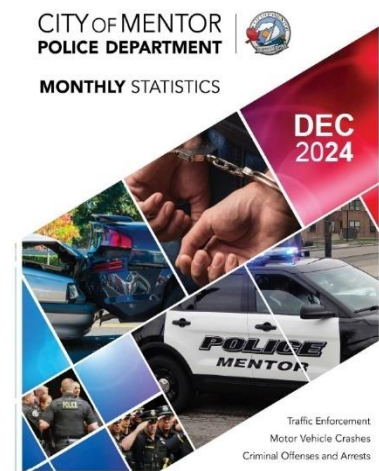
Visitors to the Mentor Police Department are welcomed by our Records Unit staff. Our staff assists the public with filing crime, accident, and civil reports, public records requests, solicitor permit applications, vehicle releases as well as answering many police-related questions. Daily Records Unit duties include merging all case reports into the records management system, preparing criminal cases for both Mentor and the Lake County Common Pleas courts, updating all criminal case and ticket dispositions, filing ATF Gun Trace requests, reporting crime statistics to the state, and managing subpoenas. Our Records staff truly enjoys when they can give out prizes to local kids earning an

officer-issued “Safety Citation” for wearing their bicycle helmets.

The management of records includes addressing the retention schedule of the various records we possess. Each year, Records staff determine those records which are beyond the records retention period. The retention period for most felony case records is 10 years after the case is closed, and three years for misdemeanors. Most records are stored electronically for longer periods of time, and possess investigative value. Each year, the department shreds those records which no longer fall within the retention schedule. The shredding process is witnessed by a police employee to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of these records are maintained during this process.

In 2024, all Records staff completed refresher training on the “Sunshine Laws,” also known as public records law. Fulfilling public records requests have become a complex and time-consuming function. It is critical that staff understand which records which can be released, and of those, what record information must be redacted to protect individuals’ rights. The Records Unit fulfills hundreds of requests, large and small, each year.

Each month Records staff provided numerous reports to various requestors, both internally and externally. Internally, ad hoc data queries were run to provide patrol supervisors, up to the Chief of Police, with information to aid them in effectively planning directed patrol activities or special details. Externally, reports were provided to the media, local businesses, homeowners’ associations, and citizens, based on their specific requests.



Communications Division

Safety Forces Communications Unit



The Mentor Safety Forces Communications Unit is committed to providing efficient, attentive, quality service to the residents and safety forces we serve. We promote TEAMWORK in our center; RESPECT to those who have given us their trust; are ACCOUNTABLE to those we serve; maintain INTEGRITY in the performance of our duties; and DEDICATE ourselves to the profession we have chosen.

In 2024, the Mentor Emergency Dispatch Center managed a total of 100,061 phone calls. Among these, 15,251 were 9-1-1 emergency calls, with an impressive 99.96% answered within the national standard of 15 seconds or less demonstrating their commitment to excellence.

Our dedicated dispatchers processed 46,064 calls for service, efficiently supporting both the Police and Fire Departments:

- 36,007 calls for the Police Department.
- 10,057 calls for the Fire Department.



The road to becoming an exceptional dispatcher is not easy. It can take years to hone the required skills, which include emergency management, communication, organization, attention to detail, and multitasking. The Mentor Communication Unit is proud to provide a high level of training to new dispatchers. By the end of 2024, Dispatcher Jarm completed her final phase with Fire Radio and Dispatcher Zavada successfully finished her Police Radio training. Both have a bright and exciting future in telecommunications.



Several dispatchers were honored in 2024 with the prestigious Exceptional Service Award for their outstanding work when a tornado struck the City of Mentor as well as the tragic Mentor Green Mobile shooting event, both occurring in 2023. Those recipients were: Dispatchers Megan Francis, Val Holzheimer, Brad James, Britani Kish, Erica Soeder, and Ashley Wayman. Assistant Communication Supervisor Linda Hulderman was also recognized with a Letter of

Commendation for her superior leadership during an August weather-related event that caused a power failure resulting in a temporary evacuation of the emergency dispatch center.

In July 2024, Dispatch took a significant step forward with the long-anticipated upgrade to its Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, transitioning from Tyler's CADMSP to Tyler's CAD Enterprise. This marked the first major upgrade since 2012. The new CAD Enterprise works seamlessly with Patrol and Fire's mobile computers for two-way information transmission, and the enhancements introduced by the upgrade offer telecommunicators powerful tools to better serve the residents of Mentor. In addition, Zetron Max Fire-Station alerting was implemented into the dispatching software. This allows for multiple fire stations to be dispatched simultaneously for quicker response times. Fire station tones provided by the new system are proven to ensure better wellness for fire station staff.



Looking towards 2025, research and planning was conducted in 2024 to keep dispatch technology and services up to date. ProQA software, also known as emergency medical dispatch software, was researched, and determined to be a smart investment. ProQA is an interface to dispatch CAD software that quickly identifies medical emergencies over the phone and then prompts dispatchers to provide relevant medically approved first aid instructions to the caller. This information is also transmitted to responding EMS units to better prepare them for medical care upon arrival. ProQA was approved for purchase in 2025. As Ohio's Next Generation 911 is likely to be reality by the end of 2025, the department has been researching requirements and connection options for this system.



Next Generation 911 is a secure network, provided by the State of Ohio, that will allow 911 calls by text and other mediums. This network also routes wireless 911 calls directly to the Mentor Communications Unit, providing quicker responses to emergencies. Currently all wireless 911 calls in Lake County are routed through the Central Communications Unit.

Corrections Division

The Mentor City Jail supports the Operations Division of the Mentor Police Department. It is classified as a twelve-day facility with ten individual cells, two court holding cells, specialty cells, and administrative offices. The Jail operates 24/7 using a staff of seven full-time Corrections Officers and one part-time Corrections Officer.



Jail staff are responsible for the processing of arrestees (booking, fingerprinting, property maintenance and bond management), securing and caring for inmates, preparing inmates for court, maintaining, and operating the jail's 'Intoxilyzer 8000' for breath alcohol testing, in-house jail inspections, and the overall security, safety, and cleanliness of the facility. Proper booking and fingerprinting are critical to ensuring the maintenance of accurate state and federal criminal history records.

In 2024 a total of 1,068 adults were processed through the Mentor City Jail, compared to 1,311 in 2023. In 2024 there were 367 adults temporarily held for court appearances in the Mentor Municipal Court, compared to 352 in 2023. Five adults were sentenced by the Mentor Municipal Court to serve time in the Mentor City Jail, compared to eight in 2023. Corrections Officers were responsible for collecting bonds and fines for the Mentor Municipal Court when the court was closed. In 2024 a total of \$138,738.00 in bonds and fines were collected by corrections personnel.

In 2024, 23 juvenile offenders were processed in the jail, compared to 24 in 2023. In compliance with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, quarterly reports were completed and forwarded to the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prisoners Processed/Booked	1257	1415	1311	1068
People Sentenced	4	6	8	5
People Temporarily Held	367	406	352	367
Juveniles Processed	22	36	24	23

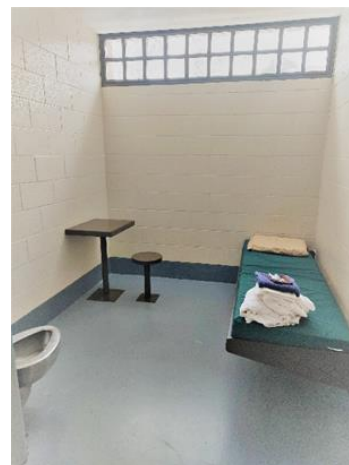


The Mentor City Jail continued to maintain effective per day housing costs by maintaining proper food service management. A total of 1,370 meals were served in 2024. Meals served in the Mentor City Jail are approved by the State Dietician and inspected by the Health Department on an annual basis.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Meals Served	1908	1975	1938	1370
Annual Meals Cost	\$5,818	\$7,939	\$8,808	\$7,110

The Mentor City Jail continues to comply with current jail standards that are mandated by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Bureau of Adult Detention. In 2024, the Mentor City Jail was in 100% compliance with the Bureau of Adult Detention Jail Inspection.

The Mentor Jail is covered by a video surveillance system, with cameras in all non-private areas of the jail. Cameras are not allowed to view inside of cells or bathroom areas. Videos recorded on these cameras are often requested for court to show the condition or conduct of suspects upon entering the jail. These videos are available for viewing when there are any complaints that must be investigated.



All Corrections Officers received 29 hours of training in 2024. This training included: all Policies and Procedures, Suicide Prevention, Fire Extinguisher training, Stress, the Corrections Officer's Silent Killer, Survival Tips If You Are Taken Hostage, Fentanyl Exposure: 5 Safety Tips for Corrections Officers and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), among other topics.

Property & Evidence

The Property & Evidence Unit falls under the Support Services Division of the Police Department. This Unit is closely supervised and monitored by Captain Robert Valley. The primary function of the Property & Evidence Unit is to provide a safe and secure location for all evidence and property collected by Mentor Officers. This unit is tasked with making sure evidence is ready for court, or in cases of found property, making sure that it is securely stored until the rightful owner is identified and can claim the item. We strive to provide quick and efficient service to the Police Department, prosecutor's office, courts, and the public at large.



In 2024, the Property & Evidence Unit handled 3,144 pieces of property and evidence. For 2023, this unit processed over 4, 000 pieces of property and evidence. While this number has noticeably decreased, this is due in part to the change in marijuana laws, but also related to procedures on entering property. For example, a wallet is recovered, which contains credit cards, business cards, identification cards, etc. Reporting officers used to list all the contents individually leading to 6-7 entries for a wallet. Officers are now

encouraged to make only one entry for the wallet, and then list the contents of the wallet in the police report.

All property and evidence items were tracked to include the item description, case number, submitting officer, date and time of submission, and the storage

Property & Evidence Items Processed Annually					
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2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
4,891	4,129	4,620	3,890	4,030	3,144

location of said item. Known as “chain of custody,” the transfer of any item from one person to another is documented, in the electronic property records system. This includes any evidence transferred from our facility to any laboratory staff for analysis, prosecutors, or other officers of the court. When items are returned to this facility from the above-mentioned entities, being returned to the rightful owners or items being destroyed when it involves contraband from adjudicated cases.

Property & Evidence keeps an inventory and maintains some of the equipment used by the Patrol Division. This includes radar and lidar equipment, AEDs, and radiological instruments used in the event of any radiological events at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant. We also make sure that all officers have access to equipment for the safe handling of any property and/or evidence, especially access to latex gloves. We restock the property and evidence packaging products, such as paper bags in various sizes, plastic zip lock bags of various sizes, an assortment of different sized envelopes, various sized boxes and sealing tapes.



Property & Evidence is also responsible for supplying and distributing copies of digital evidence as needed, usually photos and/or videos. We are tasked to burn copies of officers’ bodycam and dashcam videos and/or case photographs, to CDs, DVDs and/or USBs. These are produced for the City of Mentor Prosecutor’s Office, the Lake County Prosecutor’s Office, or to fulfill public records requests. In 2024, 570 hours were spent processing more than 2,400 videos. This is compared to 2023 when we spent 800 hours processing 2,820 videos. Public records requests for bodycam have become a burdensome process, as videos need to be reviewed thoroughly, redacted per Ohio



“Sunshine Laws”, and finally copied to a storage medium or transmitted to the requestor.

The Property & Evidence Unit continues to manage the Lake County Prescription Drug Drop Box located in the police department's lobby. In 2024, Property & Evidence collected over 1,800 pounds of discarded prescription and over the counter drugs. All these were transported to the Lake County Narcotics Agency for proper disposal.



Mentor Police Department Organizational Chart

