



BURLINGTON POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

September 2023



PRIDE MARCH

This year's annual Pride March commemorated the 40th anniversary of Vermont's first Pride march. Sponsored and organized by the Pride Center of Vermont, the march is all about a community where love and acceptance prevail. And it was **FABULOUS!**





MANHUNT

On Wednesday August 30 2023, two officers were called to a welfare check of a man passed out in a running vehicle. The vehicle matched the description of one used in a gun-involved robbery approximately a week ago. When the officers approached the man and roused him he became belligerent and uncooperative. The man—later identified as Eric Edson, 52—fled at a high rate of speed, assaulting both officers with the vehicle in the process.

Later that evening the unoccupied vehicle was located in the North Ave Cooperative. Officers observed Mr. Edson in the vicinity; he was in possession of a firearm. He fled again, on foot and then on a stolen bicycle. From the Leddy Beach area he used a paddleboard to get to a moored sailboat, in which he attempted to abscond before being intercepted by the Coast Guard. The sailboat ran aground on the base of cliffs along Rock Point, and Mr. Edson abandoned the craft and went ashore.

Multiple officers—including personnel from the US Coast Guard, the Colchester Police Department Marine Unit, the UVM Police Department, and a canine officer from the Essex Police Department, as well as the BPD's Emergency Response Unit—responded, but Mr. Edson escaped in the darkness.

Mr. Edson remained on the run for eight days, during which time he stole multiple additional vehicles including a dump truck and a tractor. On Thursday September 7, troopers with the Vermont State Police and game wardens with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife responded to a tip and saw Edson in a kayak on the Lamoille River. Edson landed the kayak, which is believed to have been stolen, then fled on foot before jumping into the river. Troopers and wardens arrested him when he came ashore.

Because of the unusualness of Mr. Edson's various modes of flight, from cars to bikes to paddle boards to sailboats to tractors, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that Mr. Edson is a dangerous person. He allegedly robbed people at gunpoint, stole property, absorbed law-enforcement resources, and put the public at risk with his criminal behavior. Kudos to our law-enforcement partners for apprehending him.



TORCH RUN

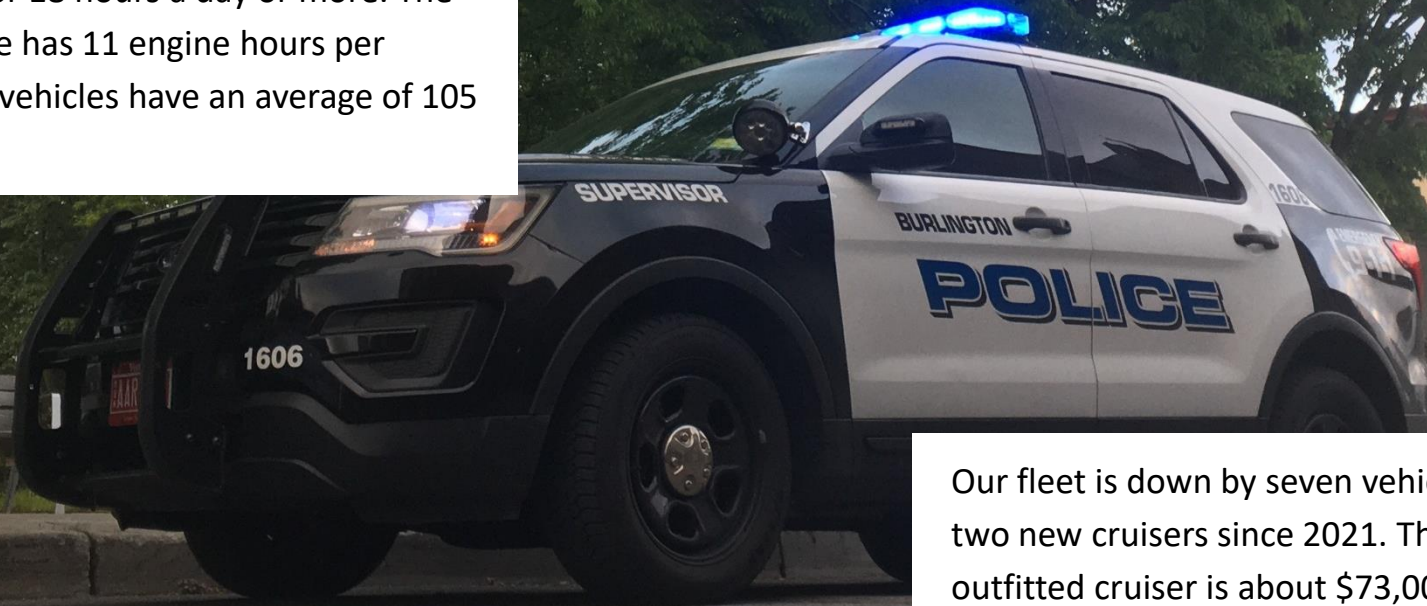
The **Law Enforcement Torch Run** is a fundraising benefit for the Special Olympics. Nearly 100,000 law-enforcement professionals from around the world participate. Our team included BPD personnel and officers from the UVM Police Department, too. The Special Olympics fosters training, teamwork, and accomplishment for millions of children and adults with intellectual disabilities.





POLICE VEHICLES

Our fleet is aging and overtaxed. Because we operate around the clock, and every day of the year, the vehicles in our fleet have a higher engine use/run times than other vehicles. Given the nature of shift work, it is not unusual for a cruiser to be in operation for 18 hours a day or more. The average American automobile has 11 engine hours per week, while the BPD's patrol vehicles have an average of 105 hours.



Our fleet is down by seven vehicles. We have only received two new cruisers since 2021. The cost of a new, fully outfitted cruiser is about \$73,000, which includes: the purchase cost of \approx \$50,000 per vehicle; \approx \$16,500 for outfitting with lights, cage, wrap, etc.; and \approx \$6,500 for electronics / radio, etc.



SURVEYS

In light of the Safer Together Solution Burlington proposal, here is a recap of previous survey results

TALITHA REPORT, August 2021

- About 80% of respondents were satisfied or extremely satisfied with their 911 responses, and people of color were more likely to be satisfied or extremely satisfied.
- People of color are more likely to trust police than their white counterparts and less likely to trust other emergency services and social workers.
- Key reasons for satisfaction with police were prompt response and professionalism.
- Key reasons for the smaller number of unsatisfied responses were lack of training for mental health and delayed response.

NATIONAL POLICE FOUNDATION SURVEY, Dec 2019

From the SMS survey, with its stronger statistical sample:

- 88.01% agree or strongly agree that, “during the encounter, the officer treated me with dignity and respect.”

From the long-form survey,

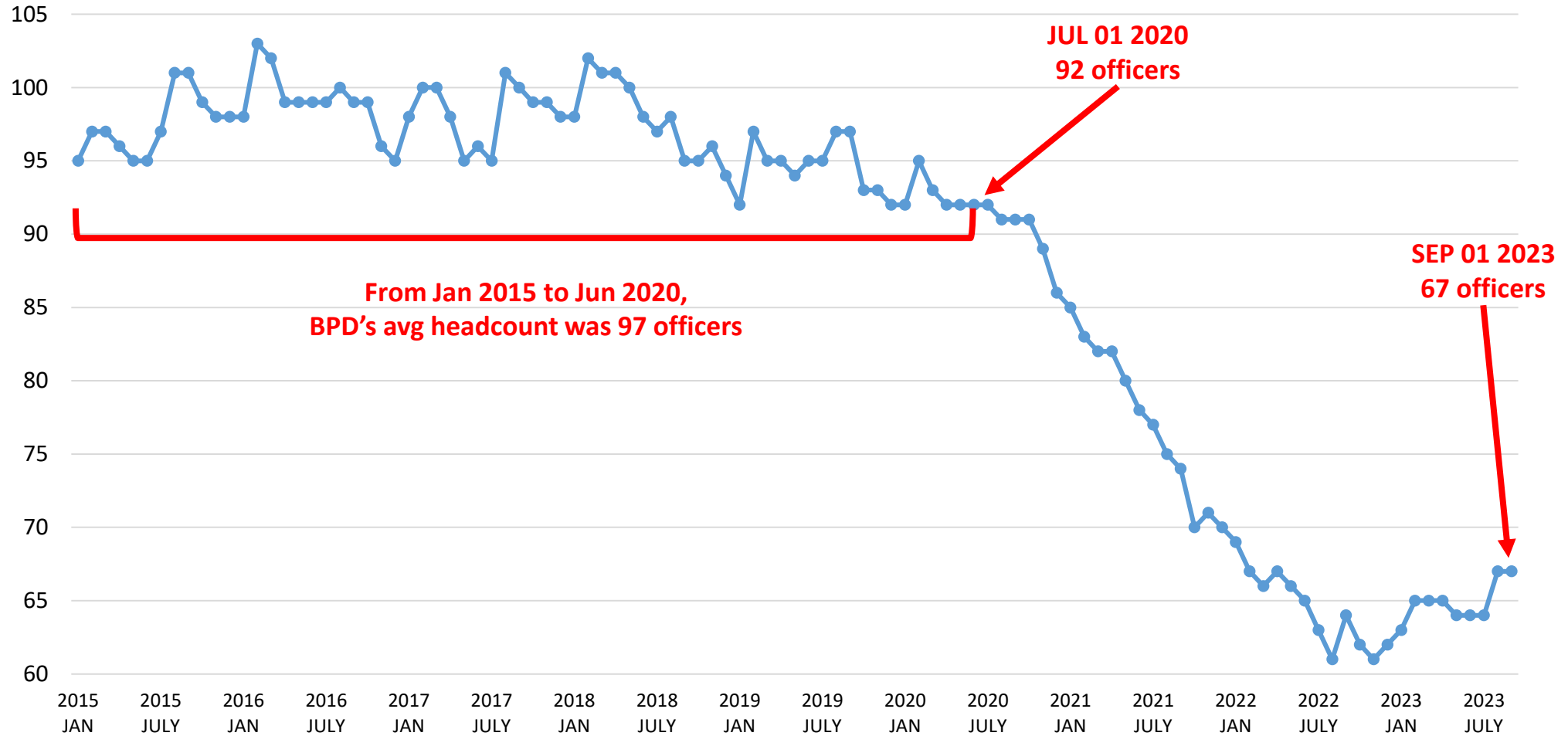
- 71% of respondents have confidence that the BPD can do its job well
- 73% believe we act professionally
- 82% feel comfortable calling the BPD if they need help.

You can see all of these results and more at the [“Burlington Community Survey Platform Report”](#)



BPD SWORN OFFICER HEADCOUNT, 2015-2023

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





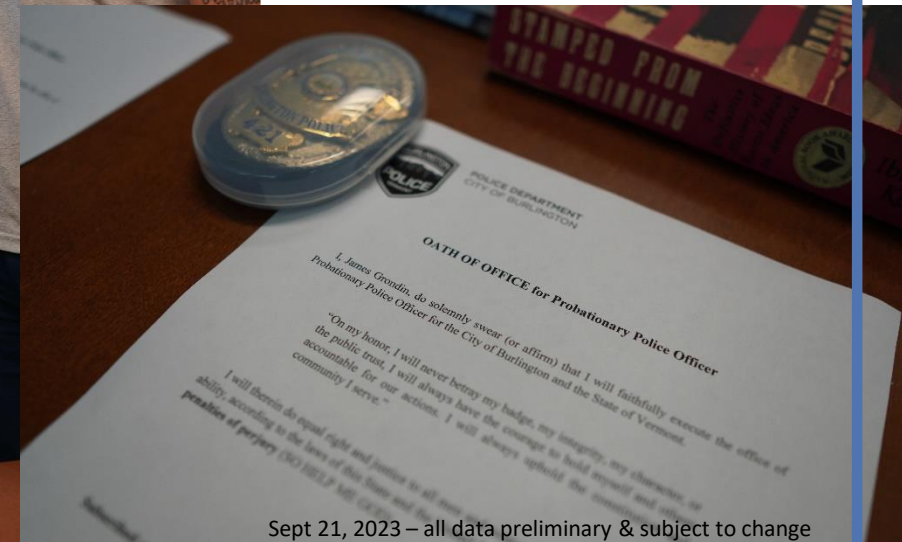
TWO NEW OFFICERS



At the beginning of September, we swore in two new pre-certified police officers, or “lateral officers.” This means that they have already been police officers with an agency other than the BPD—in this case, one officer comes to us after several years’ experience in Virginia and the other after a few years in Texas. Because they are already certified, they don’t need to attend the entire 16-week Vermont Police Academy. But we will still give them 580 hours of field training, to ensure that they police Burlington with the unique style and compassion our neighbors expect.

HOW’S THE REST OF THE COUNTRY DOING?

An article in [Forbes](#) reported “A survey of 182 police agencies in 38 states and Washington, D.C. from the Police Executive Research Forum noted that, although hiring is improving, the 50% increase in police resignation last year [2022] compared to 2019 and the total sworn staffing decreasing by 5% over the past three years is outpacing the hiring. In addition to pay, some cite public scrutiny following the protests of 2020 that prompted current and potential cops to rethink the role.” Another [article](#) about the City of Alameda, CA, pointed out their dire situation, stating that “Almost one-third of the 88 sworn positions in his department were vacant.”



Sept 21, 2023 – all data preliminary & subject to change



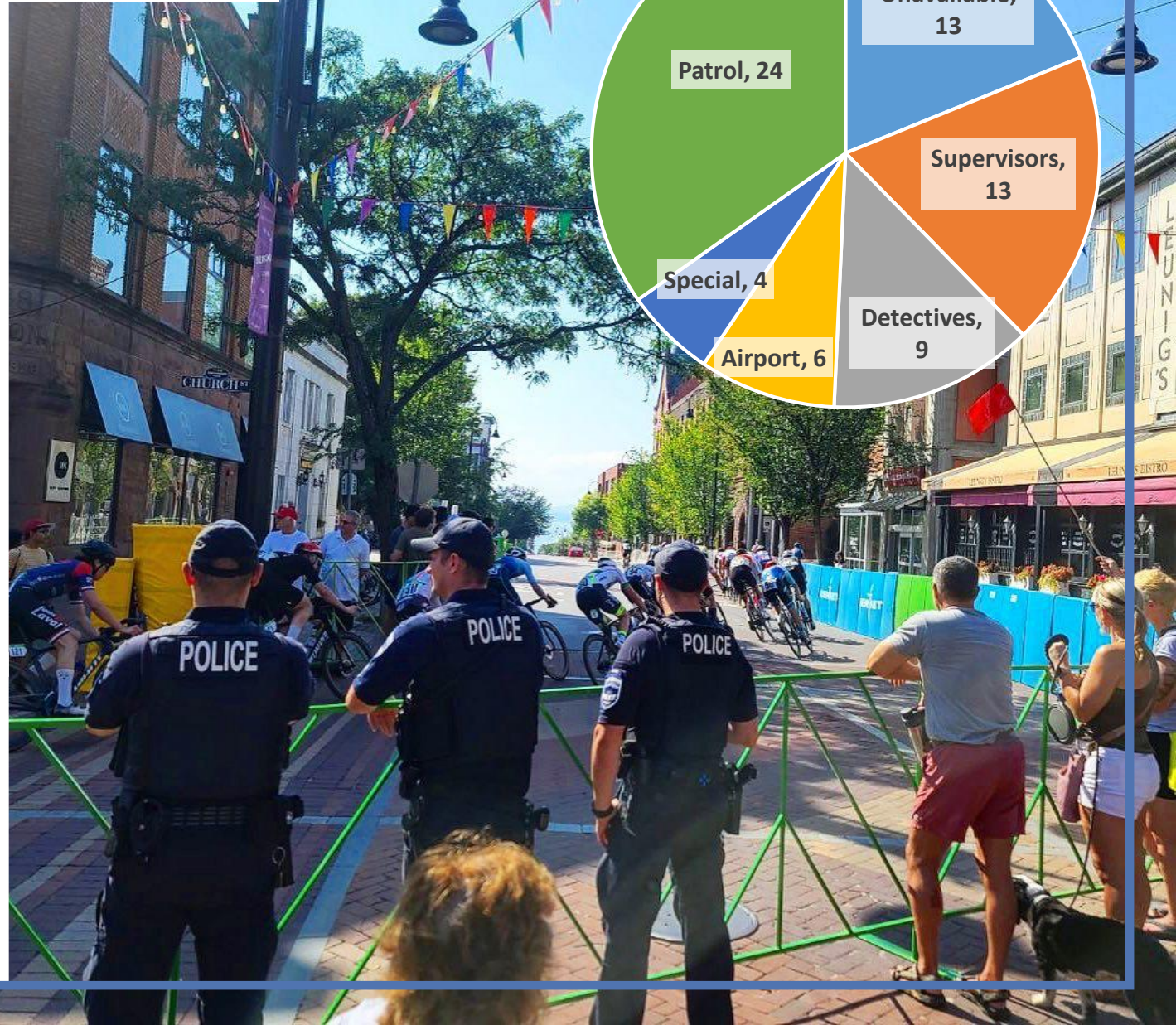
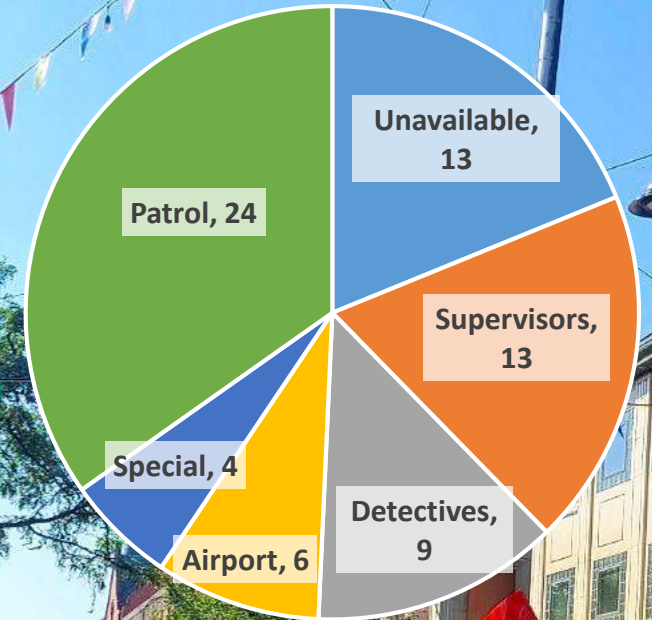
69 TOTAL, 56 AVAILABLE

As of September 15, 2023, the BPD has **69 total sworn officers**, of whom 56 are available to be independently deployed. Historically, headcount has been in the high 90s; currently we are authorized for 87 officers.

- minus 13 on injury, on FTO, or at VPA = 56
- minus 13 supervisors = 43
- minus 9 detectives = 34
- minus 6 airport officers = 28
- minus 2 special assignments = 26
- minus 2 Marketplace officers = 24

24 officers on Patrol

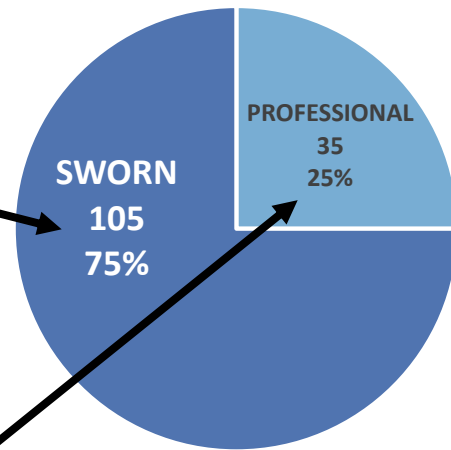
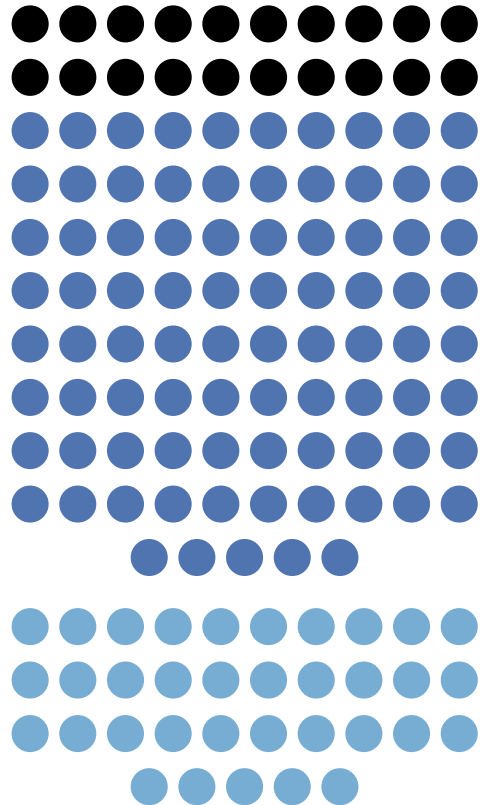
Additionally, BPD currently has 4 CSOs (of 11) and 5 CSLs (of 6)



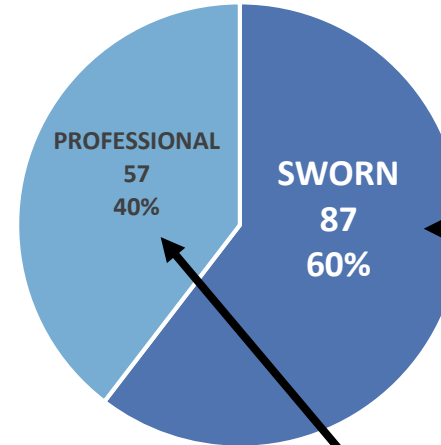
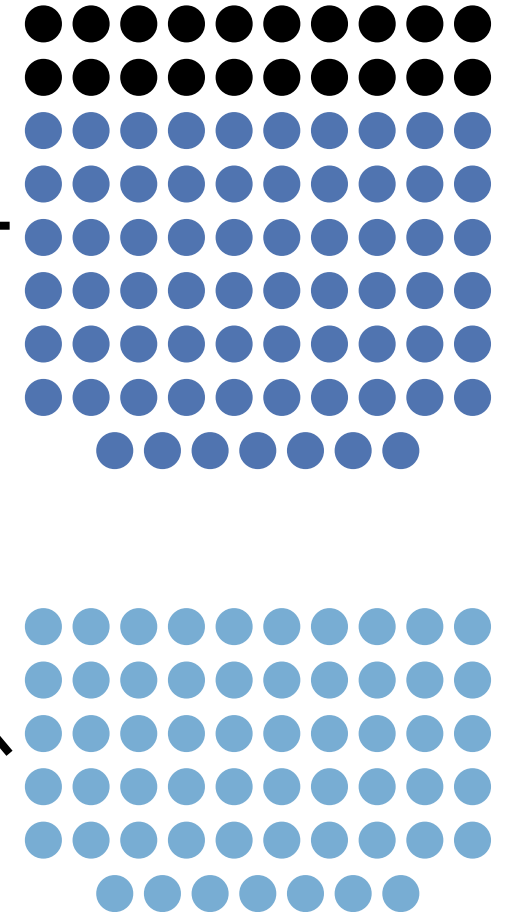


CHANGING PROPORTIONS

Authorized 2019
140 total*



Authorized 2023
144 total



Since 2019, we have significantly changed the BPD's ratio of sworn to professional employees.

* note: Parking was part of the BPD in 2019, but they were moved to DPW in July 2020. For consistency, the eight Parking employees are *not* included in this graphic.

- Sworn supervisor
- Sworn officer
- Professional employee

"Professional employee" includes CSOs, CSLs, ID techs, dispatchers, clerks, & others



POSITIONS & TITLES

This table shows the current positions that are assigned to the Burlington Police Department. The table at the top shows sworn-officer positions. The table at the bottom shows professional positions (sometimes called “civilian positions,” although we eschew the artificial military connotations that carries). At the right-hand edge of both tables are two columns, one that shows the number of employees authorized in each position and one that shows the number of employees currently on staff in each position. All data is from September 15, 2023.

SWORN POSITIONS		# AUTH	# ON STAFF
1	Chief	1	1
2	Deputy Chief	2	2
3	Lieutenant	6	6
4	Sergeant	11	5
5	Police Officer	67	55
		87	69

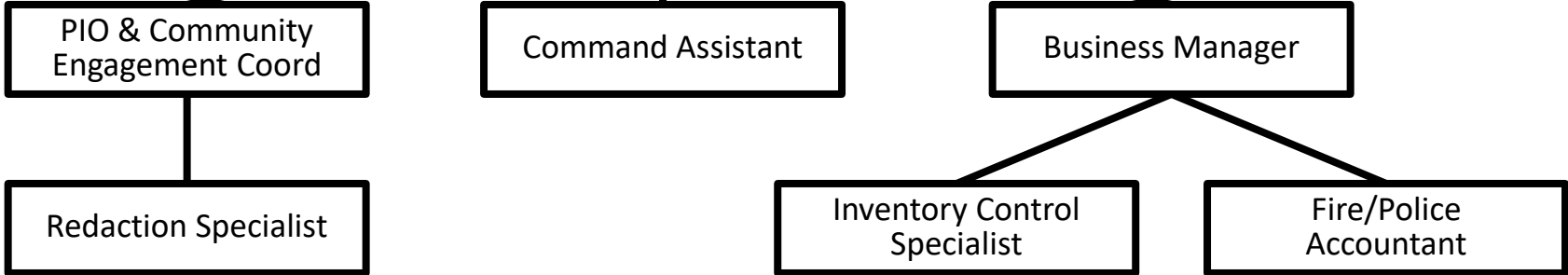
PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS		# AUTH	# ON STAFF
1	Application and Technology Support Specialist	1	1
2	Assistant Director of CAIP	1	0
3	Beach & Parks Patrol	x	x
4	Burlington CARES Clinical Supervisor	1	0
5	Burlington CARES Clinician	2	0
6	Business Manager	1	1
7	Community Service Manager (CSM)	1	1
8	Community Service Officer (CSO)	11	5
9	Community Support Liaison (CSL)	6	5
10	Community Support Supervisor (CSS)	1	1
11	Criminal Identification Technician	2	2
12	Digital Media Redaction Specialist	1	1
13	Domestic Violence Victims Advocate	1	1
14	Emergency Communications Manager (ECM)	1	1
15	Emergency Communications Specialist (ECS)	14	8
16	Executive Manager	1	1
17	Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police	1	0
18	Inventory Control Specialist	1	1
19	Police / Fire Accountant	1	1
20	Police Recruitment and Hiring Coordinator	1	1
21	PIO & Community Engagement Coordinator	1	1
22	Records Clerk	4	4
23	Senior Network Administrator	1	1
24	Training and Special Projects Coordinator	1	1
25	Uniform Bureau Support & Administrative Coordinator	1	1
		57	39
		144	108



NEW ORGANIZATION

Executive Manager

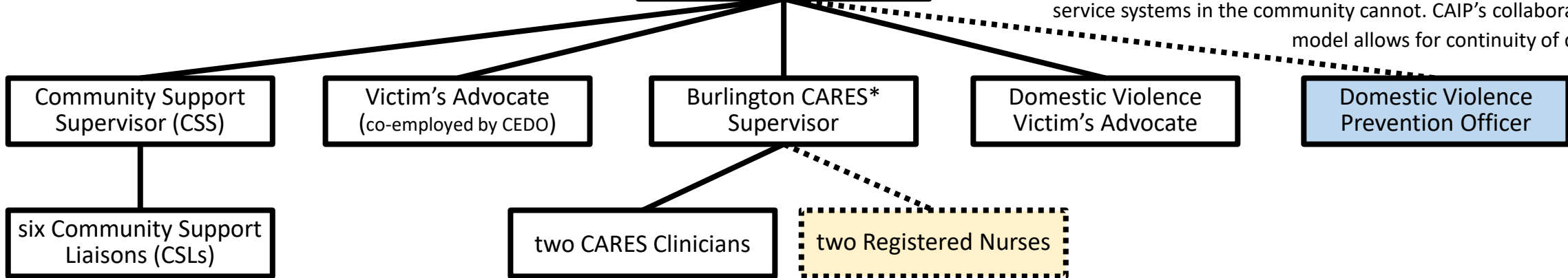
The Executive Manager is essentially a chief of staff for the police department. Like the two deputy chiefs and the Assistant Director, CAIP, it's an executive-level position directly reporting to the Chief of Police. In addition to supporting those executive roles, it guides project management and implementation.



This month, the BPD promoted Shannon Trammell to Executive Manager. We are also in the process of hiring the Assistant Director, CAIP.

Assistant Director, CAIP

The AD CAIP will oversee our Crisis Advocacy Intervention Programs. CAIP is "lower barrier" assistance that supplements the social service system, addressing needs when community social service systems in the community cannot. CAIP's collaborative model allows for continuity of care.



*Burlington CARES is the **Crisis Assessment, Response, and Engagement Service**; specifics about it are in development



REVISED 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.

We originally implemented [the Priority Response Plan](#) in May 2021. We have made several revisions, shown in this chart. The categorization of incidents has **not** changed. (Our primary goal remains **NEIGHBORS' PHYSICAL SAFETY**, so Priority 1 incidents are still Priority 1 incidents, etc.) But many Priority 3 incidents will now receive a different response.

In the chart, **incidents labeled "CSO"** will initially receive a response from a CSO, rather than a police officer, unless the incident evolves in a way that changes its category or requires a sworn officer.

Incidents labeled "ONL" (for "Online Only") will be diverted to an online reporting function. Unless extenuating circumstances apply, callers will be asked to make an online report. There are reporting mechanisms for callers who do not have Internet access.

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

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



INCIDENT VOLUME

YEAR-TO-DATE 9/15

	YTD INCIDENTS (as of 9/15)	%Δ
2018	21,494	100%
2019	20,530	↓5%
2020	17,737	↓15%
2021	15,288	↓12%
2022	17,726	↑16%
2023	21,455	↑21%
	Δ 2018 to 2023:	no change

Year-to-date, **incidents in 2023 are up 21% compared to 2022. They are up 40% over 2021.** In fact, 2023's incident volume is equal to 2018's.

Patrol officers are addressing the same number of incidents with 50% fewer patrol officers. Of the 21,455 incidents in 2023 so far, 2,664 have been “stacked”—i.e., 12%.

Additionally, 2,607 have been referred to online reporting, or 12%.





SELECTED VALCOUR INCIDENTS, YTD AS OF SEPTEMBER 15

	Assault - Agg	Assault - Simple	Burglary	Crash w Injury or Fatal	Disorderly Conduct	Domestic Assault*	Domestic Disturb	Gunfire	Larceny (all)**	Mental Health Issue	Overdose	Robbery	Sexual Assault	Stolen Vehicle	Traffic
2018	37	133	119	64	99	46	343	3	397	558	41	13	53	15	1,992
2019	37	111	68	62	109	59	328	3	487	547	34	16	41	37	1,441
2020	39	103	71	41	99	41	473	10	525	685	70	14	48	43	982
2021	49	102	115	61	94	30	402	12	727	704	94	8	33	74	535
2022	51	126	122	72	105	31	397	23	1,102	848	155	14	30	240	315
2023	33	144	129	87	61	36	329	9	985	712	350	16	26	226	454

* = combines incidents categorized as “Domestic Assault – Felony” and “Domestic Assault – Misdemeanor”

** = combines incidents categorized as “Larceny from a Person,” “Larceny – from a Building,” “Larceny – from Motor Vehicle,” and “Larceny – Other”

NOTE: All categories shown year-to-date, through September 15 of their respective year

NOTE: These data are derived from Valcour incidents. Valcour is the BPD’s computer-aided dispatch and records-management system. Incidents are initially categorized by dispatch according to the information provided by a caller; the category may be changed by the officer who responds to the scene and/or the detective who takes the case. Offense data and/or NIBRS data may differ.



DRUG OVERVIEW – Grim Statistics

Overdoses in Burlington are at unconscionable levels. It is possible there may be as many as 500 by year's end. The Valcour category of "Overdose" generally does not include fatal overdoses—those are usually carried under the category "Untimely." A death cannot be officially called an overdose until the medical examiner determines a cause of death. In some instances, our detective bureau explores charges for "Selling or dispensing a regulated drug with death resulting," 18 VSA §4250. But because of the prevalence of polydrug results from toxicology reports, it is exceedingly challenging to make a case against a single provider of drugs to hold them accountable for someone's overdose death.



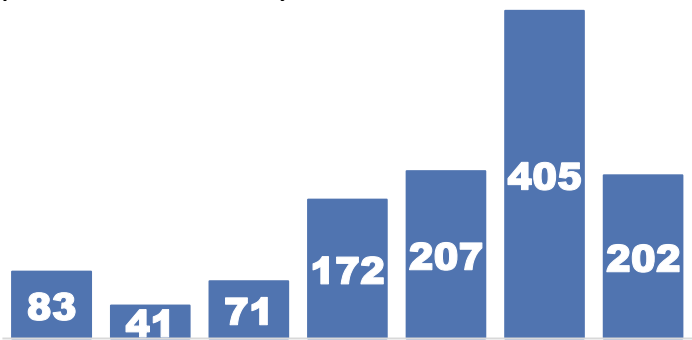


DRUG OVERVIEW – Making Drug Tips

- MAYOR
- DEPARTMENTS ▾
- RENTAL & PROPERTY INFO
- CALENDAR
- CITY COUNCIL
- NPAs

Neighbors experiencing or observing suspected narcotics activity can submit that information via our [Online Tip form](#). It's prominently placed near the top of our [Police Department homepage](#) on the City of Burlington website.

With fewer patrol officers, a smaller narcotics unit, and no Street Crime team, open-air drug activity has risen over the past three years, and drug tips have gone up, too, in a pattern remarkably similar to overdoses:



2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023*
Full year data for all years but 2023

Sept 21, 2023 – all data preliminary & subject to change



- Police Department
- Key Department Directives
- About Us
- Online Incident Reporting
- Press Releases
- Police Transformation
- Police Commission
- Transparency & Data
- Crisis, Advocacy, Intervention Programs
- Citizen Complaints and Compliments
- We're Hiring
- Parking & Parking Enforcement
- Safety & Crime Prevention Resources

Police Department

[Modified BPD Priority Response Plan](#)

[File an Online Incident Report](#)

[Request a Copy of your Police Report](#)

Reporting any and all suspicious activity helps to solve and prevent crimes.

To report suspicious activity or submit a drug tip [Submit Tip Online](#) or Call (802) 540-2420





DRUG OVERVIEW – The Drug Unit

The BPD Drug Unit is a part of the Detective Services Bureau, or DSB. It consists of one sergeant, two detectives, and a third detective assigned as a task force officer (TFO) to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In the past there have been three or four detectives rather than two. Additionally, the BPD formerly fielded a three-to-five officer Street Crime team to address open-air narcotics activities, among other duties. Despite being smaller than in the past, the Drug Unit has had several high-profile, successful cases over the past few years:

21BU016850 – [Nine members of a Philadelphia-based drug enterprise arrested](#), January 19 2023 (active federal prosecution ongoing)

21BU017403 – [Quenton Dodson arrested for distributing methamphetamine](#), January 20 2022 (active federal prosecution ongoing)

22BU001955 – [Melvin Hill convicted after jury trial](#) on drug and firearms charges, August 22 2023 (sentencing expected in early 2024)

22BU020340 – [Kenneth Jackson convicted, sentenced](#) to 48 months in prison, Sept 19 2023

23BU00356 – [Manuel Francis indicted](#) for allegedly stealing controlled substances during a burglary, March 2 2023 (active federal prosecution ongoing)

The Drug Unit also has several ongoing active investigations. The unit's current focus is on fentanyl and methamphetamine, and dedicating BPD's limited resources to individuals supplying drugs rather than street-level distribution.

From the Melvin Hill conviction press release: "The Burlington Police Department is committed to public safety, and that includes protecting those who suffer from substance use disorder," said Burlington Police Chief Jon Murad. "We do not tolerate trafficking poisonous substances into our community, particularly by traffickers who target vulnerable people. This case shows our resolve to hold these individuals accountable. The BPD's team, including Drug Unit Sergeant Phil Tremblay, want to acknowledge the fantastic work at trial by Assistant United States Attorneys Stendig and Waples, and their legal team. We would also like to thank the DEA and the ATF for their efforts in this investigation."



DRUG OVERVIEW – Turning the Tap

There are many tools for addressing the substance-use crisis that Burlington is experiencing. Four of them are shown here.

For the past few years, three have been turned all the way up while one, on a street level, has been nearly shut down. The current mix is not working.

None of these should be all the way up, and none should be all the way down.



Decarceration



Deprosecution



Harm reduction



Street-level Enforcement





THE BPD IS HIRING!

\$74,500
starting pay

\$100,000
top pay (when contract matures)

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

www.bpdcareers.com

