



STOW POLICE DEPARTMENT 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



A Message from Chief Jeff Film



Mayor John Pribonic,

It is a privilege to serve as the Chief of Police for the City of Stow for the past ten years. Through a collaborative effort with the City Administration, City Council, community leaders, and my department personnel, we have been working hard to provide the best possible services to our community. It is my privilege to present to you and City Council the 2024 Annual Report of the Stow Police Department. This report is a compilation of statistical information as well as an outline of the multiple services that we provide to the community.

Tragically, we had two homicides in our community in 2024. The occurrence of these crimes can have a profound impact on both a police department and the surrounding community. Homicides can shake the sense of safety and trust among residents, heightening fear and sometimes leading to increased calls for transparency, justice, and preventive action. These incidents can also draw media attention, impacting public perception and community-police relations, making it essential for law enforcement to respond with professionalism, compassion, and clear communication. Our officers worked jointly with county and state investigators to ensure that these crimes were thoroughly investigated and that the family members were given the proper resources to help navigate these senseless acts of violence.

The loss of several officers due to promotions and retirements can significantly influence a police agency's operations and effectiveness. These changes often create staffing shortages, increase workload for remaining personnel, and can impact response times and limit proactive police efforts. I am incredibly proud of the individuals who stepped up and successfully managed the challenges that these shortages created. Their dedication, resilience, and leadership during such difficult times truly exemplify their strength and professionalism. I admire the way our officers rose to the occasion without hesitation to ensure that we continued our high level of service that our community has come to expect.

Recruiting will always be a top priority for my office, and I am very proud of the men and women that we have brought in this year to fill the vacancies left by our retiring members. With the promotion of several new supervisors and the onboarding of four new officers, we are ensuring that our community will be properly served for many years.

It is our honor to work for this community and we strive to perform to the highest level of law enforcement through proper recruitment, stringent rules and regulations, and by always serving with a service above self mentality.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chief Jeffery E. Film".

Chief Jeffery E. Film



Stow Police Department

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<https://stowohio.org/departments/police/>



[Stow Police Department, Stow, OH](#)



[@StowPD](#)



[stowpolicedepartment](#)

Mission, Vision Statements, and Core Values



Mission Statement

Our mission is to be a visible deterrent to criminals and a visible assurance to the public; to protect those who have been wronged and pursue those who have done wrong, and to serve all with dignity and respect.

Vision Statement

We will meet challenges and inspire public confidence through innovation, professionalism, and a commitment to excellence.

Core Values

- Integrity:*** We adhere to a code of honesty and ethical principles in all that we do.
- Service:*** We faithfully and selflessly serve those who have entrusted us to perform the duties of a Stow Police Officer.
- Commitment:*** We are dedicated to performance reflective of the highest standard of personal and organizational excellence.

Uniformed Patrol Division

Out of the 45 full-time sworn police officers at Stow PD, 36 are assigned to the Uniformed Patrol Division. These officers are dedicated to patrol duties and are first responders to all emergencies and calls for service from the community.

This was a unique year for staffing. With several scheduled retirements and a few unexpected resignations (other job opportunities, moving out of state), our staffing level fell to critical numbers at times. Our recruitment and hiring teams worked diligently to hire a large number of new officers to fill these vacancies. Through a combination of hiring lateral police officers and giving a new civil service test, we were able to refill our ranks with quality police officers.

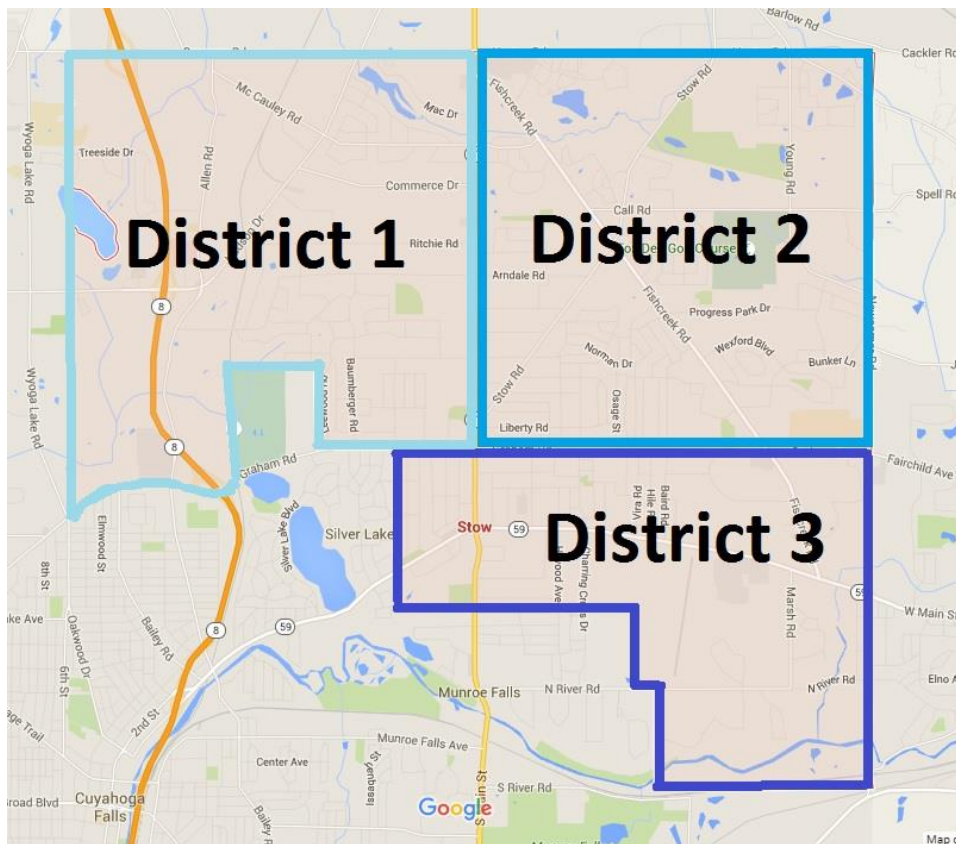
Seven Field Training Officers (FTOs) logged a total of 52 weeks of training new officers in 2024. That is well above the yearly average of training weeks our FTO team is tasked with, and was no small request! Field training is a critical task for our FTOs in order to pass along our high standards of service and professionalism to the next generation of Stow police officers.

Pictured below is a Daily Observation Report which our FTOs use to document the trainee's progress.

Stow Police Department – Field Training Evaluation Program						
Daily Observation Report						
Training Phase: 1 2 3 Ext. <small>(Circle One)</small>		Shift: Day A/B / Night C/D <small>(Circle One)</small>		Date: _____		
Probationary Officer/Unit #: _____						
Field Training Officer/Unit #: _____				DOR# _____		
Patrol District(s): _____		SIFA #: _____		Calls for Service #: _____		
Non-Evaluation Day (Reason) <small>(Circle One)</small> RS ILD TNG DIF OBSERVATION Other (explain): _____						
Performance Assessment Categories	Exceeds Dept Standards	Meets Department Standards		** Not Responding to Training	Total Training Time on Category	
	Yes	No	Not Encountered Not Evaluated			
1. Interpersonal Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2. Orientation/Response to Calls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3. Driving/Use of Emergency Equip.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4. Telecom. - Protocol/Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
5. Patrol Strategies/SIFA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
6. Patrol Tactics – Officer Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
7. Criminal Codes and Statutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
8. Investigative Ability – Case Mgmt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
9. Problem Solving - Decision Making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
10. Traffic Enforcement and Codes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
11. Crash Scene Management - Invest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
12. Use of Discretion – Ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
13. Work Ethic – Core Values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other Training (With supporting documentation attached)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<small>The undersigned attest that the Probationary Officer was fully briefed regarding the contents of this report and their performance this date.</small>						
Probationary Officer _____				Field Training Officer _____		
Shift Supervisor _____				FTEP Coordinator _____		

Patrol Districts

The city is divided into 3 separate districts for police coverage. Each officer is assigned a district at the beginning of their shift. Supervisors and officers who are not assigned a designated district are referred to as “District 4” cars which means they cover the entire city. Each district has unique characteristics. District 1 houses industrial areas, business districts, SR-8, an Army National Guard armory, area hotels, a hospital, and residential areas. District 2 is largely residential, but does contain some business districts, large areas of green space, and the city’s high school. District 3 has large areas of retail business, along with the Kent State Airport, three schools, and many residential streets.



The City of Stow shares a border with seven different cities: Cuyahoga Falls, Franklin Township, Hudson, Kent, Munroe Falls, Streetsboro, and Tallmadge.

While the police department is responsible for law enforcement duties in the city, other law enforcement agencies also have shared jurisdiction in Stow. These agencies include the Summit County Sheriff’s Department, the Ohio State Patrol, as well as other state and federal law enforcement agencies.

2024 Day Shift

Day shift operates from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM and typically bears much of the responsibility for interacting with schools, courts, local businesses, and banks. In 2024, the shift saw a 15% decrease in total calls from the year before. A total of 7,755 calls were handled by day shift officers.



2024 Afternoon Shift

Afternoon shift operates from 3:00 PM – 11:00 PM. This shift handles a wide variety of incidents, such as vehicle crashes, domestic-related calls, neighbor disputes, shoplifting, and welfare checks. In 2024, afternoon shift officers responded to 8,333 calls for service, which was a 13% decrease from 2023.



2024 Night Shift

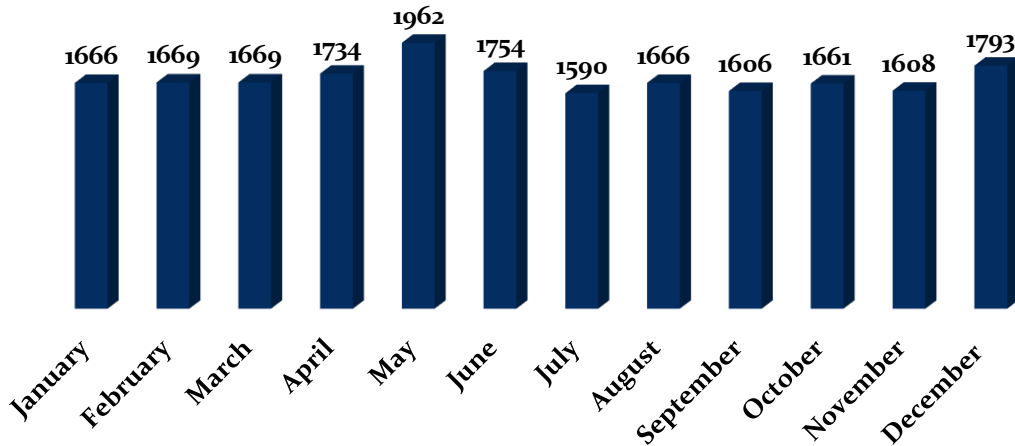
Night shift operates from 11:00 PM – 7:00 AM and traditionally leads the patrol division in OVI (drunk driving) and alcohol-related incidents and arrests. In 2024, night shift made a total of 36 OVI arrests. Overall call volume for the shift increased by 8% from the previous year.



Statistical Information

In 2024, Stow Police handled 20,378 calls for service, a 10% decrease from 2023. Self-initiated, proactive policing saw an 18% decrease, likely due to our unique staffing issues in 2024. The following charts and graphs will help give you an idea of when our calls for service occurred.

Calls for Service Monthly Breakdown



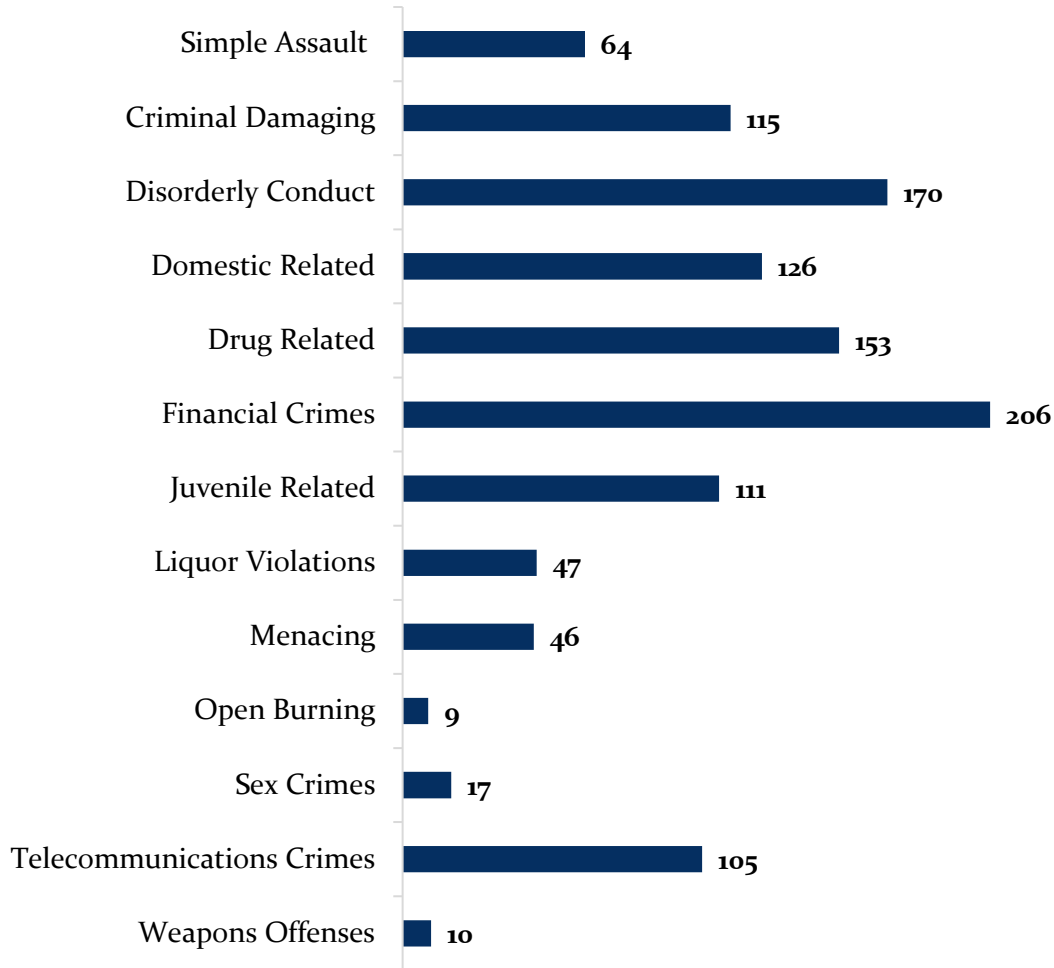
Crime Statistics

Calls are classified using FBI Uniform Crime Reporting standards. This method of reporting breaks down calls into Part I and Part II offenses. Part I crimes consist of Murder, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary/Breaking & Entering (B&E), Theft, Auto Theft, and Arson. Part II crimes cover all other offenses.

FBI Part I Crimes

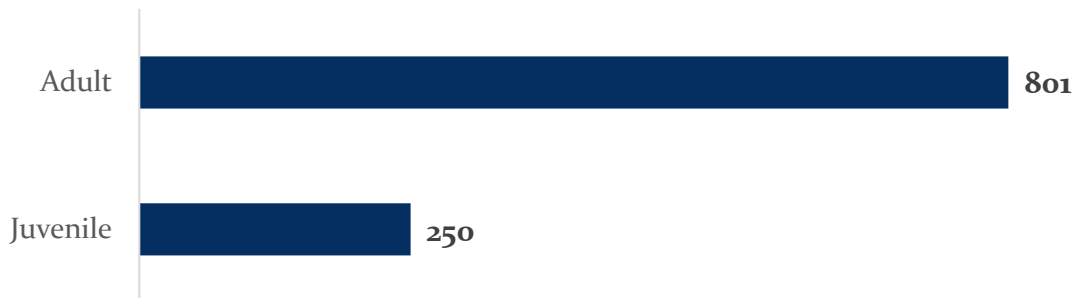


Other Reports and Part II Crimes



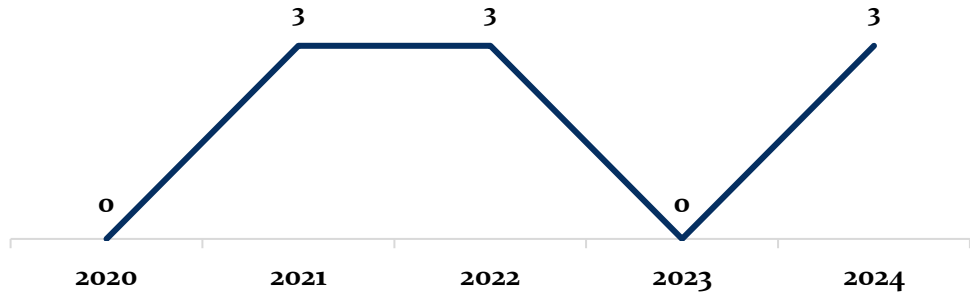
Arrests

In 2024, Stow Officers made 1,051 total arrests, down from 1,283 in the prior year. However, juvenile arrests and referrals to our Stow Youth Services diversion program by officers increased 19% from 2023.

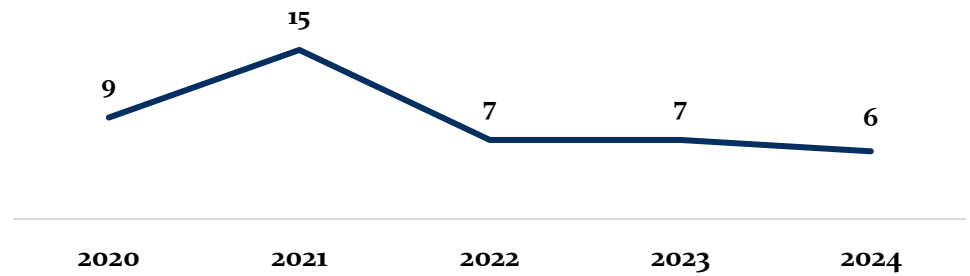


Part 1 Crimes – 5 Year Look Back

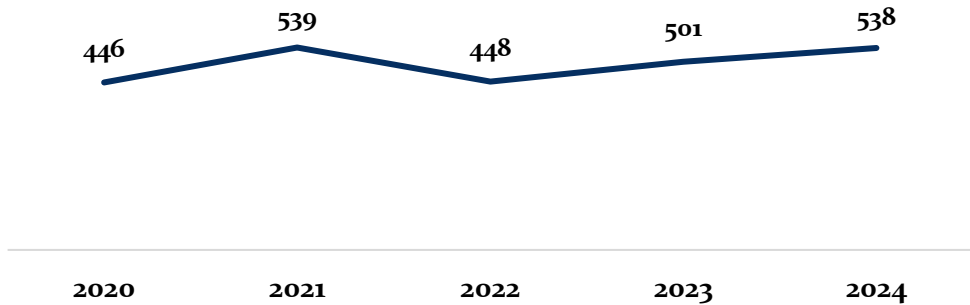
Arson



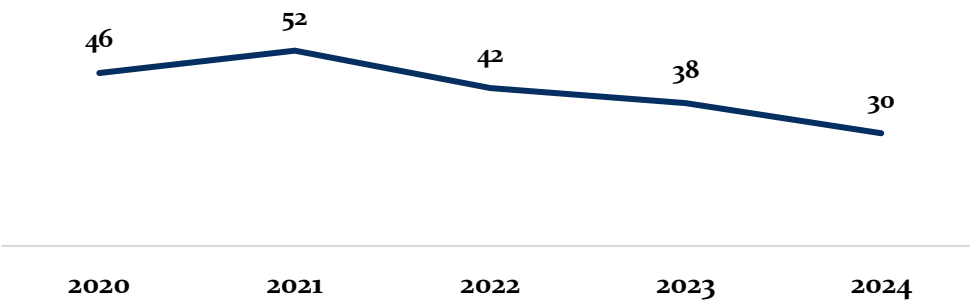
Auto Theft



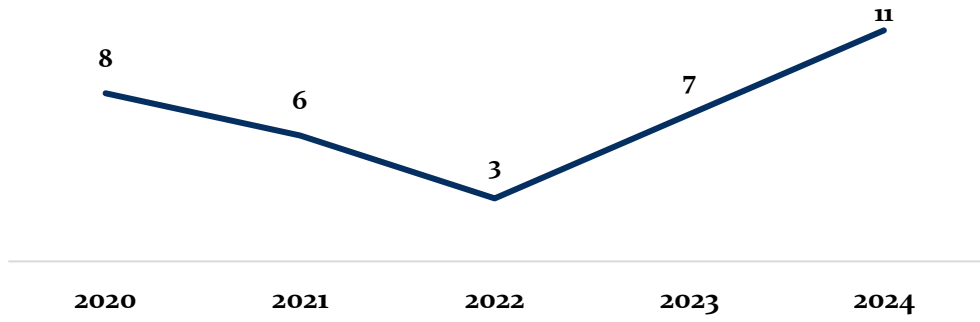
Theft



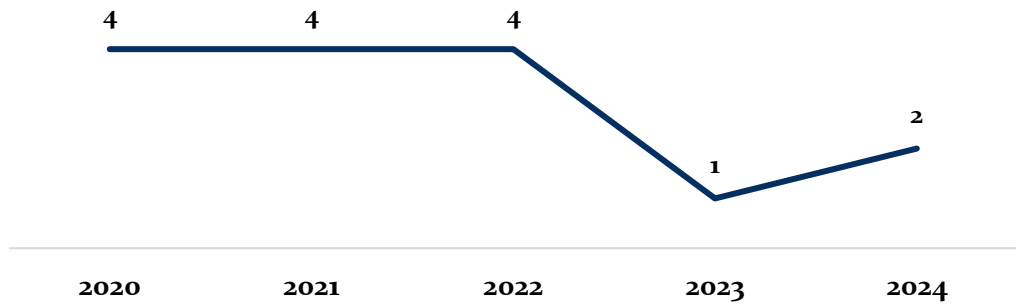
Burglary & B&E



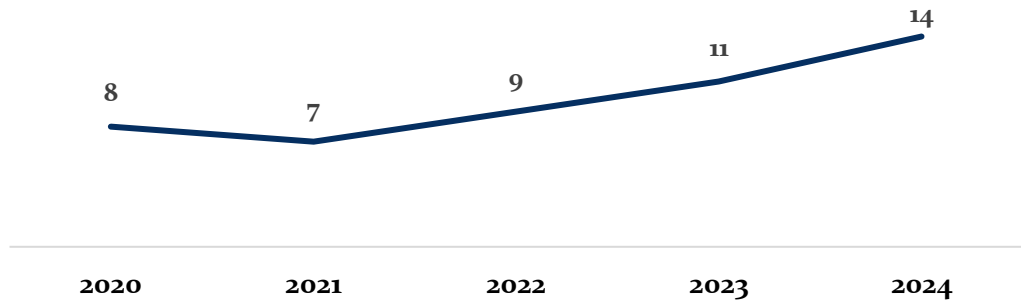
Aggravated
Assault



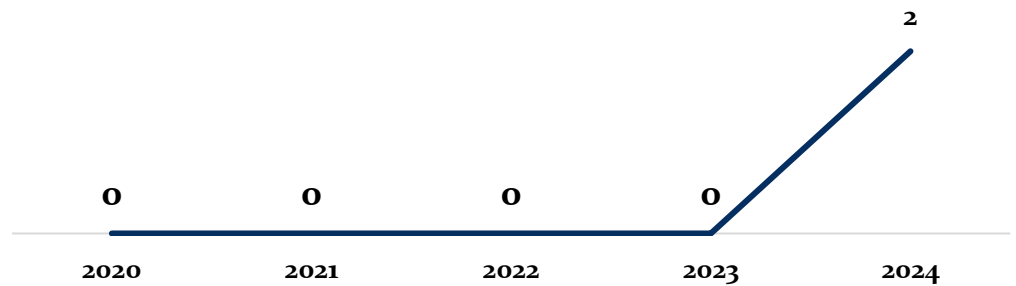
Robbery



Rape



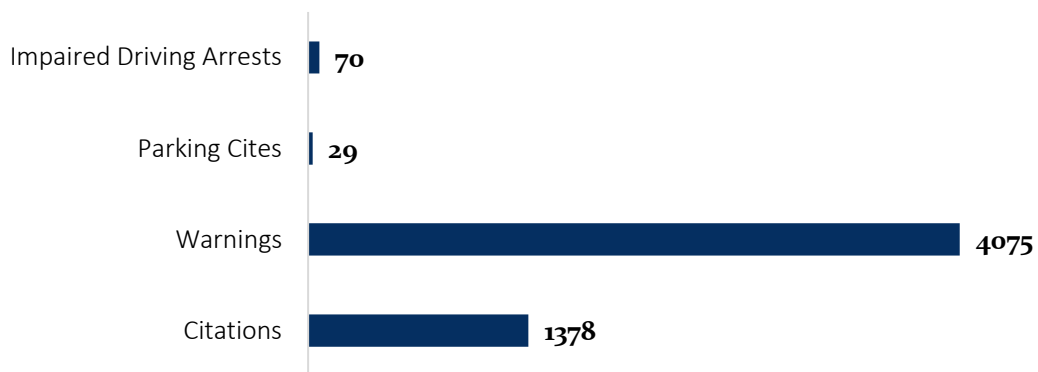
Homicide



Traffic Enforcement and Traffic Crashes

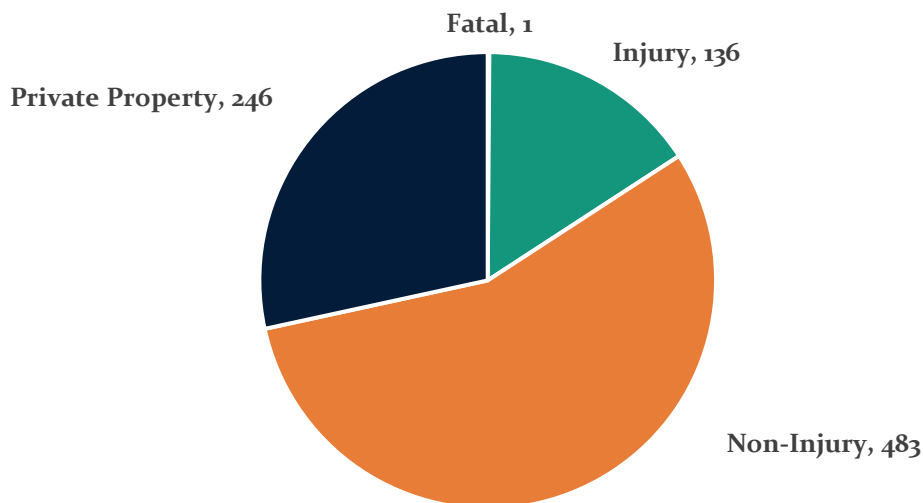
Traffic enforcement is an important part of law enforcement and is handled by all officers in the uniformed division throughout their shifts. Conducting traffic enforcement not only keeps the roads safe, but it is also in line with our mission of being a visual reassurance to the public and a deterrent to criminals. Officers routinely focus on detecting and arresting impaired and suspended drivers while also monitoring neighborhood streets and known problem areas.

Traffic Enforcement

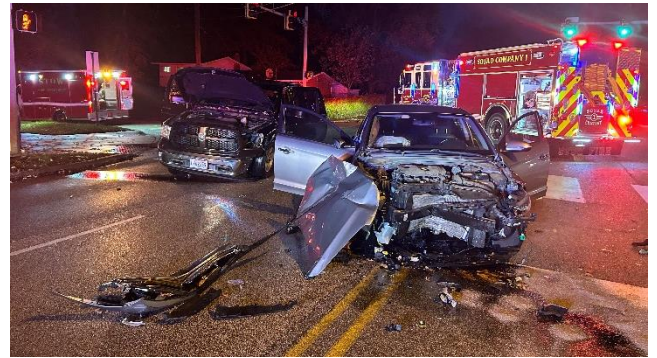
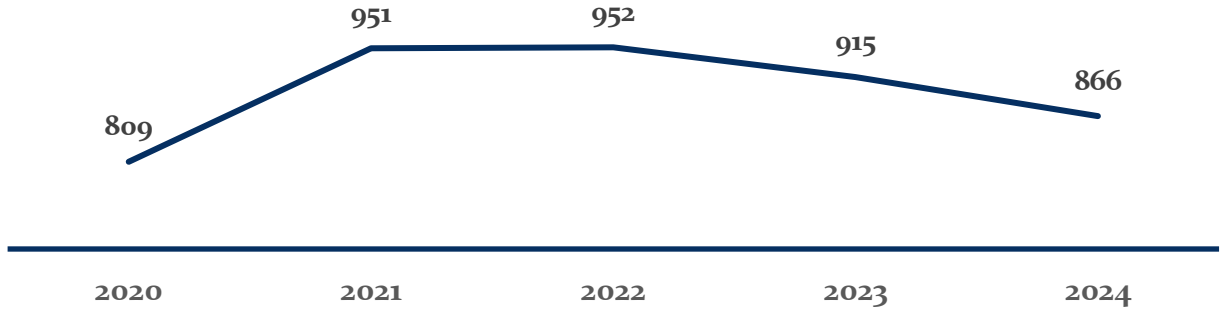


In 2024, the Stow Police Department handled 866 traffic crashes. This is a 5% decrease from 2023; however, we have seen an increase in the severity of crashes. Both the number of fatal and injury crashes are up from 2023.

Traffic Crashes



Traffic Crashes - Five Year Data



Retirements, Promotions, and New Hires

Retirements

Officer Barry Smith

Officer Barry Smith retired on July 28, 2024, after nearly 33 years in Law Enforcement. He was sworn in at the Stow Police Department with six other officers on December 16, 1996 – they came to be known as the “magnificent seven” throughout the years.

Officer Smith served in the Ohio National Guard from 1987 to 1993, then worked for Oakwood Village PD from 1992 until he came to Stow PD in 1996.

During Officer Smith’s time at the Stow Police Department, he served an astounding twenty years as our high school’s School Resource Officer!

Officer Smith was a certified CIT officer for most of his career. He proudly served on the board for the Ohio School Resource Officer Association. He was a valuable presenter for the NOPE (Narcotic Overdose Prevention Education) program and implemented many trainings for youth over the years to encourage good choices.

Congratulations to Officer Barry Smith! We all wish him the best in his retirement and are grateful for his many years of dedicated service.





Sgt. Daniel Drummond

Sergeant Dan Drummond retired on February 25, 2024, after serving the City of Stow since January of 1992.

Sgt. Drummond worked at the Aurora Police Department for a year and a half before joining Stow, totalling a thirty-four-year law enforcement career! Sgt. Drummond served as a K-9 handler with his canine partner Ranger before taking on the role of Sergeant in December 2003.

Sgt. Drummond was a member of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), and served many years as a Metro SWAT negotiator. Sgt. Drummond was in charge of the Reserve Officer program for many years, and the drunk driving grant initiatives that scheduled officers to be on the road for OVI enforcement and checkpoints throughout Summit County.

We wish him well in all of his future endeavors!

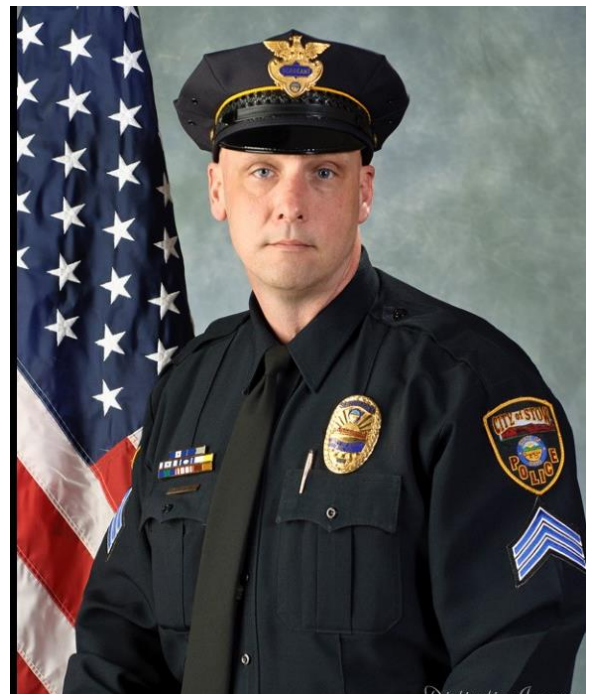
Sgt. Jeffrey Breznak

Sgt. Jeffrey Breznak retired on March 11, 2024 after an impressive thirty-eight years in law enforcement.

He was hired with six others on December 16, 1996. Sgt. Breznak started his law enforcement career as a corrections officer in Pinellas County Florida in 1986 and worked there until 1989. He next came to Ohio and joined the Aurora Police Department. While with Aurora PD he was a part of the Portage County Drug Task Force for seven years. He also served as a hostage negotiator for five years.

Sgt. Breznak was a Field Training Officer for five years at Stow PD before transitioning into the detective bureau in 2004. During his time in the detective bureau, he created the department's computerized criminal affidavit system and the department's forensic video and photo processing station. He was promoted to sergeant in 2008. He acted as the Jail Administrator for the department from 2009 until his retirement in 2024.

Congratulations to Sgt. Breznak in his retirement!



Promotions

Sgt. Brett Balog

On February 13, 2024, Officer Brett Balog was promoted to sergeant. Sgt. Balog has been a member of the Stow Police Department since August 2014. He has served as a Field Training Officer, Crisis Intervention Team member, and is a valued member of our training staff. Sgt. Balog is an instructor in Defensive Tactics, Taser, and Active Threat. He is an active member of the Metro SWAT team. Sgt. Balog completed a week-long leadership course for first-line supervisors and plans to attend a college-level leadership course in Columbus in 2025.



Promotions (cont.)

Sgt. Kevin Smith

Officer Kevin Smith was promoted to sergeant on March 18, 2024. Sgt. Smith was hired with Stow PD in August 2015. He has served as a Field Training Officer for our agency for the last several years. Along with his promotion came the task of leading the newly formed drone team for Stow PD. His job duties include the purchase, research, and implementation of drone equipment, and coordinating of team members attending the proper training for this new endeavor, set to launch in 2025. Sgt. Smith completed several leadership training courses in 2024 and is looking forward to the challenges ahead.



New Hires

With three planned retirements and four unexpected resignations, 2024 was a challenging year for staffing. The process of recruiting, identifying, hiring, and training new officers to keep our staffing up was one of the biggest tasks we undertook as an agency this year. Our staff did an amazing job of working through the shortages while continuing to ensure we provided adequate coverage to the City. Hiring is one of the most critical components for any agency, and finding the right people to bring aboard is vital to success. Our diligent work in 2024 ensures that we stand ready to keep our community safe.

Robert Simone

Officer Simone was sworn in on January 8, 2024. Prior to coming to Stow PD, he worked for the Ohio State Highway Patrol for eight years. Simone resigned in July of 2024 to seek other opportunities.



Maria Kisha



Maria Kisha was sworn in on March 4, 2024. She had previously been a police explorer and an intern at Stow PD. She obtained a Bachelor's degree from Lake Erie College and then attended the Kent State Police Academy.

Maria later resigned from her position in June 2024.

Dana Lyberger

Officer Dana Lyberger was sworn in on June 3, 2024. Prior to joining Stow PD, she worked at the Cleveland Division of Police for two and a half years, working six months in the 2nd district and the 4th district. She has served in the Army National Guard for 13 years as an 88M (transportation specialist), and is currently with Hotel Company 134th BSB as the Distribution Platoon Sergeant, along with being a senior gunner with the company. She graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor's degree and is currently working on her Master's degree at Regis University. In 2024, she ran in the Akron Marathon and enjoys an active lifestyle.



Tristen Kidd



Ofc. Kidd was re-sworn in on August 12, 2024. Kidd had previously been a Stow Police Officer but left in March 2024 to seek other opportunities. When he requested to return to Stow PD, he was welcomed back and was able to transition into his previous role seamlessly.

New Hires (cont.)

Nathan Farrell



Officer Nathan Farrell was sworn in on August 19, 2024. He served as an officer with the Cleveland Division of Police for two and a half years prior to coming to Stow. Officer Farrell is a member of the United States Army Reserves and serves as a military police officer. Officer Farrell worked in the hospitality industry prior to entering law enforcement and enjoys being around people and problem-solving. He is married with two step-children.

Christina Barbe

Officer Barbe was sworn in on October 21, 2024. After graduating from the police academy in 2015 she worked for the Portage County Sheriff's Office for two years as a corrections officer, courthouse security officer, and road deputy. She started as a part-time officer with Munroe Falls PD in 2016 and moved into a full-time position there in 2017. She was a valuable member of their department for eight years, where she served as a Field Training Officer and Crisis Intervention Team member. She is also a recipient of the OVI (Drunk Driving) Top Cop Award. Christina is married and has one son.



Ellie Davidson



Officer Davidson was sworn in on December 16, 2024. Officer Davidson graduated from Youngstown State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. She completed YSU's police academy in the summer of 2023 and joined the Canfield Police Department, where she served for a year and a half. She enjoys a very active lifestyle and plays several sports in her off-time. She is one of nine children in her family and enjoys spending time with her siblings and parents.

Resignations

- Officer Samantha Wike – April 9, 2024
- Officer Maria Kisha – June 21, 2024
- Officer Robert Simone – July 26, 2024

New First Responders Memorial

In 2018, the idea of creating a dedicated memorial for Stow’s first responders was born. With the assistance of Police and Fire personnel, Councilman Matt Riehl, and a local business owner, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit was established to begin raising funds for the project.

The designs were finalized, and after years of fundraising, construction was bid out in 2024.

On Wednesday, September 18, 2024, the groundbreaking ceremony was held in front of the Stow Safety Center, where the memorial will be built.



Pictured Left to Right – Fire Chief Mark Stone, FOP Vice President (and Retired Stow Police Sergeant) Steve Dunton, Mayor John Pribonic, State Senator Kristina Roegner, Rick Archer, Police Chief Jeff Film, Councilman Matt Riehl.

The memorial will feature a focal point with plaques displaying the names of our first responders, as well as a brass sculpture of a police 8-point cap and a fire helmet. The centerpiece is surrounded by a stone and brick bench with metal accents, and is shrouded by a structure that highlights our core values: Integrity, Service, and Commitment.

The new memorial will also incorporate the City’s September 11th memorial. A section of I-beam from the twin towers (pictured right), which currently resides in front of City Hall, will be moved over to the new memorial site.



This memorial will be a beautiful and lasting tribute to the retired Police Officers and Firefighters who have faithfully served the City of Stow, performing their duties over the course of their careers. Special honors will be given to those who have lost their lives as a result of a line-of-duty death.

The project is set to be completed in the Summer of 2025.



Awards and Recognitions

Life-Saving Recognition

On June 30th at 6:00 p.m., officers and EMS responded to the listed address for a report of a male in full cardiac arrest. The man’s wife was trying to give CPR but broke her leg in the process of helping her husband to the ground. Officer Gabel arrived on scene prior to EMS and continued with CPR. EMS arrived on scene and swiftly took him to the hospital. On 10/02/2024, the husband and wife came to the Safety Center to thank all those involved for saving his life. A job well done by Officer Gabel and Stow Fire!

Recognition From the Prosecutor’s Office

Detective Mike Murphy and Officer Taylor Paxton were recognized as “TOP COPS” from the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office. The case involved a road rage incident where the suspect vehicle struck and severely injured a man, then fled the scene. After summoning EMS and interviewing witnesses, they used the Flock camera system to locate the suspect vehicle in Akron. Akron PD was able to find the hit-skip vehicle. A search warrant on the suspect vehicle was obtained and uncovered critical evidence in the case. Officer Paxton and Detective Murphy conducted thorough interviews, evidence gathering, and detailed report writing to win this case in the Court of Common Pleas.

5

News from Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich

October 2024

TOP COPS

STOW DET. MIKE MURPHY & OFC. TAYLOR PAXTON & AKRON POLICE DET. JOSEPH SMITH

NOMINATED BY ASST. PROS. RIMMA AVANESYAN & JOVANA ILIC

<p>This month’s TOP COP nomination involves three officers from two different law enforcement agencies in Summit County. It shows how the collaboration between agencies is vital to holding offenders accountable and keeping Summit County safe.</p> 	<p>reviewed city cameras and identified a license plate of the suspect’s vehicle. That license plate was registered to a person living in Akron. They called Akron Police Detective Joseph Smith and requested assistance. Det. Smith found the vehicle and identified the defendant.</p> 
<p>The case involved a road rage incident in Stow where police responded to a man being struck by a vehicle. The victim suffered several injuries and eventually needed surgery which resulted in a months-long recovery.</p> <p>Stow Detective Mike Murphy and Officer Taylor Paxton determined the driver responsible took off and was possibly in Akron. Det. Murphy and Ofc. Paxton immediately secured the scene and attended to the victim. Once they found out details of what happened, they</p>	<p>The case went to trial where jurors found the defendant guilty of vehicular assault and was sentenced to prison. Thanks to the diligence and hard work of all three officers, the defendant was held accountable for his actions.</p> <p>Thank you to Det. Murphy, Ofc. Paxton, and Det. Smith!</p> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Great job and congratulations!</h3>

S.W.A.T. Awards

Several members of the Metro SWAT team participated in the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) Physical Fitness Qualification Challenge. Stow Officer Sam Williams (top photo far right) was one of the officers that received the award for top point achievement, resulting in being featured in the NTOA magazine *The Tactical Edge*. All SWAT officers participate in annual physical fitness qualifications. Those Stow officers that were recognized in 2024 for excellence in fitness were: Sgt. Kasey Olesinski; Ofc. Brian Haddix; Ofc. Sam Williams.



Sgt. Brett Balog received Metro SWAT's Excellence in Firearms award, obtained by receiving a perfect score during qualifications.

New Equipment and Upgrades

New Ballistic Shields

Two new shields were purchased in 2024. The new shields have a higher ballistic rating (ability to stop a bullet) than the previous one, a viewport, and a front light. The shields are kept in the two supervisor cars.



Electronic Citation Software



In 2024, we implemented Enforcement Mobile Electronic Citation software. This software is what officers use to write citations and warnings on traffic stops and crashes. This software increases the efficiency of the officers, the Records Division, and the Stow Municipal Court personnel. Rather than hand-writing out traffic citations and warnings, the program enables officers to quickly upload driver and vehicle information, ordinances, and traffic stop details into the software, reducing time on roadside traffic stops. The program streamlines the process of entering the citation information into our Records Management System (RMS) by electronically uploading information rather than manually entering information by Records personnel. As information is uploaded into the RMS, it is simultaneously uploaded to the Stow Municipal Court. The program improves officers' safety, eliminates time-consuming manual work, reduces the chance of human error, and integrates electronic information processing.

Jail Upgrades

The jail received an upgrade to the thirty year old equipment that was in place since it was built. Jail control panels that provide door and light access were replaced, new computers were put in place, several door locks were upgraded, and the two-way communication components for the jail cells were repaired as well.



Flock Safety Cameras

Flock Safety is a public safety operating system that helps communities and law enforcement work together to eliminate crime, protect privacy, and mitigate bias. On average, the Flock Safety company sees 2,200+ crimes solved per week in over 5,000 communities nationwide. In 2024, The City of Stow purchased several license plate reading cameras set up at various entry points throughout the city. The cameras are solar-powered license plate recognition cameras with Vehicle Fingerprint technology. They provide real-time alerts and allow our agency to receive notifications on stolen vehicles, stolen license plates, persons with warrants, protection orders, missing persons, and vehicles associated with Amber alerts and missing children.



flock safety

Flock also increases our ability to solve crimes. Flock's advanced technology provides officers with the investigative ability to search for suspect vehicles based on plate numbers (partial or full), state, make, model, body style, color, and identifiers such as bumper and window stickers and top/back racks. The Flock Safety network allows our department to connect and

collaborate with other law enforcement agencies and privately owned cameras in neighborhoods and businesses to extend our reach and multiply our search capacity. Flock Safety has and will continue to increase our department's efficiency and effectiveness and carry out the mission of the Stow Police Department.

Since going live in May of 2024, Flock has contributed to over 30 Police Department cases. Approximately 33 charges have been issued, 15 arrests or warrants have been made, 4 missing persons have been located, and 3 stolen vehicles or plates have been recovered.

In one of many notable cases, a victim reported a male got out of his vehicle and approached her car with a baton in an aggressive manner. She fled and called the police. Officers obtained a description of the vehicle from the victim and located it on nearby Flock cameras, obtaining a full plate number, and identified the suspect. They monitored Flock and received a hit that the suspect vehicle was currently on Graham Road. Officers located and stopped the vehicle. The suspect was wearing the same clothes as the victim described, and they saw the baton in plain view on the driver's side door. The suspect was arrested and charged with Aggravated Menacing.

Training

Members of the Stow Police Department train several times a year in various disciplines in order to stay proficient in their skill set. SPD has numerous training instructors who are certified through the Ohio Peace Officer’s Training Academy (OPOTA). These officers provide practical training in the areas of Defensive Tactics, Less Lethal Defensive Weapons, Firearms, Rapid Deployment (Active Shooter Response), De-Escalation, Tactical Medical Treatment, Riot Control, and other various topics.

In 2024, Stow PD conducted 34 hours of continuing education in-house, which exceeded the 24 hours mandated by OPOTA.

In-House Training highlights

Defensive Tactics

Annually, our defensive tactics instructors lead the agency in practicing techniques that give officers enhanced skills in self-defense and the ability to arrest, control, or respond to a subject’s aggression or resistance.



Vehicle Close Quarters Battle

Stow Firearms instructors arranged for the use of an outdoor range and towed in junk vehicles so officers could learn about the dynamics of shooting in and around cars.



Training (cont.)

Active Threat/Rapid Response

The Stow Police and Stow Fire Department collaborated to train together on responding to active shooter situations. Stow Police train annually in this area and have trained in every school in the City and multiple businesses and churches over the years. Bringing Stow Fire into the training and several seasoned volunteer actors made this training an exceptional learning experience for all.



Outside Training

The City of Stow regularly invests in advanced training for members of the police department. This allows members to stay up to date on current case law, tactics, and law enforcement trends. Many of our officers also hold advanced training certifications in specific disciplines.

In 2024, officers attended a combined 319 days of outside training courses. Some of the courses spanned multiple days or weeks and included topics such as: Leadership; Response to Suicidal Subjects; Drone Operation; Sobriety Test Refresher; Narcotics Update; Grant Writing Workshop; Field Training Officer; Advanced Cannabis Impairment; Advanced Search and Seizure; and Glock Armorer school.

New CIT Team Member

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is a group of officers who have advanced training in understanding mental health and mental health encounters in a law enforcement setting. All of the Stow Police Department patrol officers are trained in crisis intervention, de-escalation, and mental health encounters but about half of the officers have advanced training and CIT certification. In 2024, Sergeant Justin Burgess completed the 40-hour CIT training course. His certification, along with hiring two lateral transfer officers (Officer Barbe and Officer Davidson) who were already CIT certified, brought our total to 27 CIT-trained officers!



Sgt. Justin Burgess receives his CIT certificate
Lt. Heather Prusha – Stow PD CIT Coordinator

Training (cont.)

New Firearms Instructors

Sgt. Justin Burgess and Officer Patrick Myers both completed the OPOTC (Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission) requirements to become firearms instructors for Stow PD. This requires several hours of careful instruction and practical teaching skills for the use and maintenance of weapons. Certifications for Rifle Instructors are forthcoming for both of them in 2025.



New Drug Recognition Expert (DRE)



A DRE is a police officer who has advanced training in recognizing impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol. Officer Taylor Paxton graduated from the rigorous three-week-long DRE school on November 11, 2024. She even earned a spot as class Valedictorian!

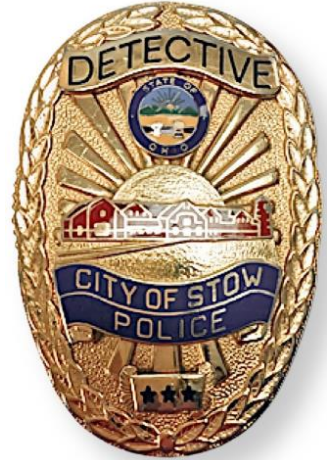
A DRE is skilled in identifying and detecting drivers under the influence of drugs and in identifying the type or category of drug that is causing the impairment. They conduct evaluations post-arrest that consist of analyzing appearance and behavior, measuring vital signs, and observing a person's response, reaction, judgment, and coordination during certain sobriety tests.

Sgt. Burgess was our agency's first DRE (certified in 2022), and continues to serve Stow and area agencies in this vital role. In addition to post-arrest evaluations, he conducts training for officers in advanced impairment education and field sobriety tests.

Investigative Division

The Detective Bureau is comprised of one supervisor and five detectives. Overseen by Lt. Heather Prusha, these detectives investigate crimes of a more serious nature within our community.

Detectives assist officers with more detailed follow-ups and help manage crime scene processing. They are trained in advanced interview and interrogation techniques and have access to investigative tools that provide comprehensive data critical to case development. They also conduct background investigations on potential police hires and Reserve Officer applicants.



Detective Murphy, Detective Dolezal, Detective Gaffney, Detective Schulz

Summit County Drug Unit

One of Stow's five detectives is assigned full-time to the Summit County Drug Unit (SCDU). This is a multi-jurisdictional task force comprised of officers from eight (8) local agencies in Summit County, as well as federal agents from the DEA, ATF, FBI, and Ohio Parole Authority. They investigate major organized groups involved in the illegal distribution of drugs throughout the county. This unit not only focuses on large-scale violators but also conducts undercover drug purchases and responds to mitigate all methamphetamine labs in the county. Additionally, they provide training and educational classes to both officers and citizens of the community. The Summit County Drug Unit has joined with the Akron Police Department Narcotics and SNUD Units to form the Akron/Summit County HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) Initiative. Northern Ohio has been designated a high-intensity drug trafficking area by the federal government. The staff at HIDTA provides training, intelligence, de-confliction, and financial support to participants. The Ohio HIDTA coordinates intelligence information with over 20 other HIDTA areas throughout the United States. The Akron/Summit County HIDTA Initiative is the largest in Ohio.

Notable Cases

Some notable accomplishments for the Detective Bureau in 2024 include:

Two homicides occurred in Stow in 2024. Our city’s last homicide was in 2017, and prior to that, in 2014. The first case in 2024 was a murder/suicide that gathered significant media attention due to the fact that it occurred in public during broad daylight and in front of multiple witnesses. In this case a male randomly and unprovoked shot a female he did not know while sitting in a drive-thru line. The shooter then took his own life.



The second homicide in the City was a male who, in a sudden fit of rage, stabbed a family member to death. He then proceeded to call 9-1-1 to attempt to summon help and confess to what he had done. The suspect remained at the home and complied with responding officers who were able to take him into custody.

Although neither of these homicides required an effort to uncover the offender, these major cases still involved several steps, including evidence processing, and working with other agencies such as the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), and the Summit County Medical Examiner's Office.

Members of the detective bureau worked tirelessly to solidify the cases and worked with the victim’s families in the aftermath.



Detective Mike Murphy worked diligently on a case involving a suspect who had stolen the identities of dozens of individuals. The case came to our attention when the suspect used a stolen credit card number to stay at a hotel room in Stow. When the owner of the credit card, who lived out of state, called the hotel to report the fraud, officers began their investigation into the initial fraud. They quickly uncovered several other instances of identity fraud. Search warrants were obtained and later served at two homes in Stow. Many hours were spent combing through information obtained from seized electronics. The suspect was charged and convicted of the

fraud offenses. Several other agencies were looking into charging the suspect for similar crimes. Many victims reported that due to the fraud perpetrated by the offender, their credit scores dropped significantly. This case involved several victims and many hours of investigation.

T CROSS CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS CRIME SCENE



In June, the business Vapor Kings was broken into for the second time in 2024. Patrol officers were able to find and apprehend two fleeing suspects that night, and called in Det. Nick Dolezal to question the suspects. Det. Dolezal interviewed both suspects and they confessed not only to breaking in that night, but also to the break-in earlier in the year. They were charged for both Breaking and Entering offenses.

Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force

Stow detectives participate in Ohio's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC). This task force is also comprised of local and federal officers whose mission is to identify, arrest, and prosecute individuals who: (1) use the Internet to lure minors into illicit sexual relationships; or (2) use the Internet to produce, distribute, or solicit child pornography.

In 2024, seven ICAC cases were referred to Stow PD and investigated by Det. Schulz and Det. Murphy. With ever-changing advances in technology, these investigations are becoming increasingly complicated. Many of these cases require significant investigation, including the need to obtain and serve multiple search warrants on suspects' computers, phones, and internet service providers. Due to the Detective's persistence, the majority of these cases have resulted in criminal charges against these offenders.



Specialized Units

Metro SWAT



Metro SWAT is comprised of 25 area police departments from Summit and Portage Counties, including Stow, as well as fire department personnel from those jurisdictions. The SWAT team is comprised of tactical operators, negotiators, technical support staff, medics and doctors, as well as a drone team and sniper team. Metro SWAT increased its vehicle fleet in 2024, adding a new Lenco Bear Cat. The team now has six vehicles, including two Armored Lenco Bear Cats, a Command Post, a Negotiator truck, a Utility box truck, and an Entry van.





SWAT stands for Special Weapons and Tactics. The team is called out for situations including criminal barricaded suspects, hostage rescues, high-risk warrant services, dignitary security details, and land navigation searches for criminals or missing persons. The team trains monthly on all these topics and more.

The Stow Police Department has five officers on Metro SWAT: Commander Ryan Schulz, Operator Sam Williams, Operator Brett Balog, Operator Brian Haddix, and Negotiator Team Leader Kasey Olesinski.

Metro SWAT was activated 28 times in 2024. On occasion, an activation occurs that does not require a full team callout. For example, four callouts were for the Drone team only, and three callouts were a request for negotiators only.

Again this year, the Metro Swat team was scheduled ahead of time and activated as an Incident Response Team during Stow's Fourth of July parade. They were stationed in a few calculated locations to assist in case a serious incident arose during the course of the parade.

Summit Metro Crash Response Team (SMCRT)

The Summit Metro Crash Response Team (SMCRT) is a multi-jurisdictional crash response team founded in 2002. Stow was a founding member of this team and continues to participate in this unit, which includes nineteen (19) different police departments. The team consists of highly trained crash investigators and reconstructionists who respond to assist with crash investigations. Officer EJ Wonner joined the team in November 2023 and continues to serve as Stow PD's representative.



Situations where the unit might be activated include crashes resulting in serious injury or fatality; crashes involving pedestrians; crashes involving motorcycles or commercial vehicles; or any other complex crash. In 2024, the team was called to assist at thirty-nine (39) crash scenes, three of which occurred in Stow.

Honor Guard

The objective of the Honor Guard is to represent the department at various ceremonial events throughout the year. In 2024, the Honor Guard unit was comprised of ten members of the department, which included Detectives Dolezal and Murphy, Officers Molody, Haddix, Reedy, Frisina, Bailey, Myers, Gabel, and Flasco. Officers Myers and Flasco were selected to fill two vacancies in the Honor Guard in 2024. Training is conducted on a quarterly basis in order to maintain a high level of precision.



In 2024, the Honor Guard participated in several events and ceremonies throughout Stow and surrounding areas. They attended the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers' Memorial (GCPOMS) Grave Marker Ceremony and placed a marker at the grave of fallen Stow Officer Jonathan Bastock during Police Memorial Week (photo below). The Honor Guard attended the GCPOMS Ceremony and stood watch at the memorial site (pictured to the left). The unit

represented our department and attended Euclid Officer Jacob Derbin's funeral after he was tragically shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call. Four representatives of the Honor Guard marched in the annual Fourth of July Parade.

At the end of 2024, Officer Rob Frisina stepped down from the Honor Guard after fourteen years of honorable service. We greatly appreciate his service and the countless hours he spent maintaining the high standards the unit has come to expect!



On 9/11, members of the Stow Police Honor Guard joined with the Stow Fire Department's Honor Guard and posted Colors at City Hall's Memorial Site.



School Resource Officer (S.R.O.)



Since 1996, the Stow Police Department has had a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) assigned to the Stow-Munroe Falls High School. Officer Barry Smith held this assignment for twenty years, taking his last walk through the halls of SMFHS in the Spring of 2024.

Ofc. Bethany Childers was selected to be the next high school SRO. Prior to her appointment, she attended additional training and was certified as an SRO. She took over the position at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

Officer Childers is a uniformed presence in the school and is responsible for providing the safety and security of both the staff and the students. In addition to providing security, she provides instruction in law-enforcement related matters and answers calls for service within the school and its immediate vicinity.

This SRO position is funded through a combination of City funds, a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and school district funds.

DARE



The Stow Police Department provides D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) to each sixth-grade class at Stow-Munroe Falls Schools. D.A.R.E. consists of police officer-led lessons that teach students how to resist negative peer pressure and to become leaders by being sources of encouragement (positive peer pressure). Other than drugs, some topics include risks and consequences, resistance strategies, healthy ways to deal with stress, effective communication, bullying, and help networks.

D.A.R.E. emphasizes the D.A.R.E. Decision-Making Model (Define, Assess, Respond & Evaluate) to teach students how to live productive lives, free from drugs and violence.

Officer Jason Bailey completed his training and took over the D.A.R.E. program in September of 2020. Officer Bailey educates approximately 420 students annually. The program is partially funded through a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office. The grant covers D.A.R.E. and

School Resource Officers who provide students with education and counseling services.

School Security Detail

Since 2012, the department has partnered with the schools in our city to provide an additional security presence at the intermediate school and the six elementary schools. Since its inception, this program, which is fully funded by the school district, has proven to be beneficial to both the schools and the department. It has allowed officers to become familiar with the operations and layout of the schools, and it gives students, staff, and parents the ability to interact with officers in a non-enforcement setting.



Evidence Technician

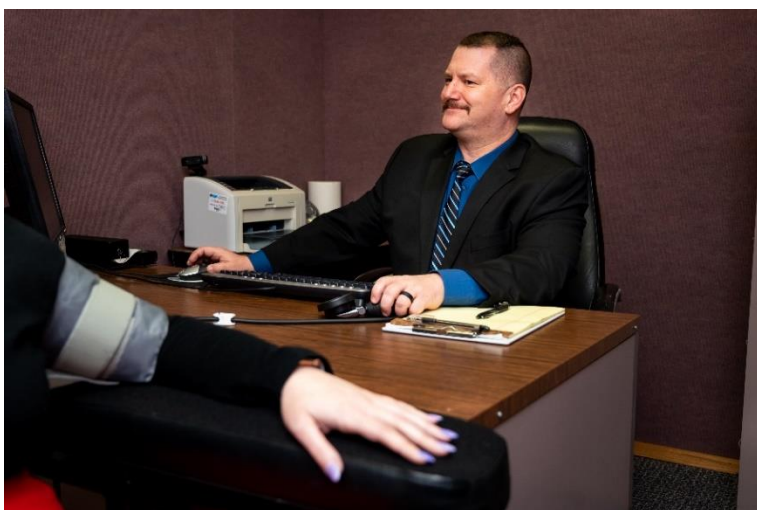
The Evidence Technician team consists of officers who are specially trained to process crime scenes. These officers work in conjunction with the Detective Bureau and respond to scenes in which there is potential for forensic evidence to be collected. Forensic evidence can be anything from photographing a crime scene, lifting latent prints from a surface, collecting bloodstain evidence, and beyond. Any evidence collected is sent to Ohio's Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) crime lab for processing.

To become an evidence technician, officers must go through an advanced 80-hour course. Many evidence technicians have advanced training beyond 80 hours. In 2024 after 13 years of service in this specialty, Officers Jesse Reedy and Brian Haddix stepped down from the team. The evidence technician team consists of Ofc. EJ Wonner, Ofc. Bethany Childers and Ofc. Jacob Pajestka.



Polygraph Examiner

Stow Police Department is one of the few local departments that has a polygraph examiner in-house. Detective Nick Dolezal is certified through the American Polygraph Association and conducts numerous examinations throughout the year. These examinations are done for pre-employment screening for new police officers, firefighters, and reserve officer candidates. Additionally, evidentiary examinations are conducted on people suspected of committing crimes. These criminal examinations are often at the request of the Stow Detective Bureau, but also come from other law enforcement agencies who partner with Stow PD.



Community Service Officer (CSO)



The department has one full-time Community Service Officer (CSO) to be of assistance within the department and the city. CSO Ed Young handles all animal control issues and is certified by the National Animal Control Association. He also assists the community with service calls that do not require a sworn officer, such as when citizens lock their keys in their vehicles. In addition to handling animal control and service calls, CSO Young is responsible for maintaining the department's fleet of vehicles and equipment and is often tasked with other miscellaneous jobs and special projects.

In 2024, CSO Young handled 334 calls for service, with the majority of these calls involving animal complaints.

Stow Police Reserve Unit

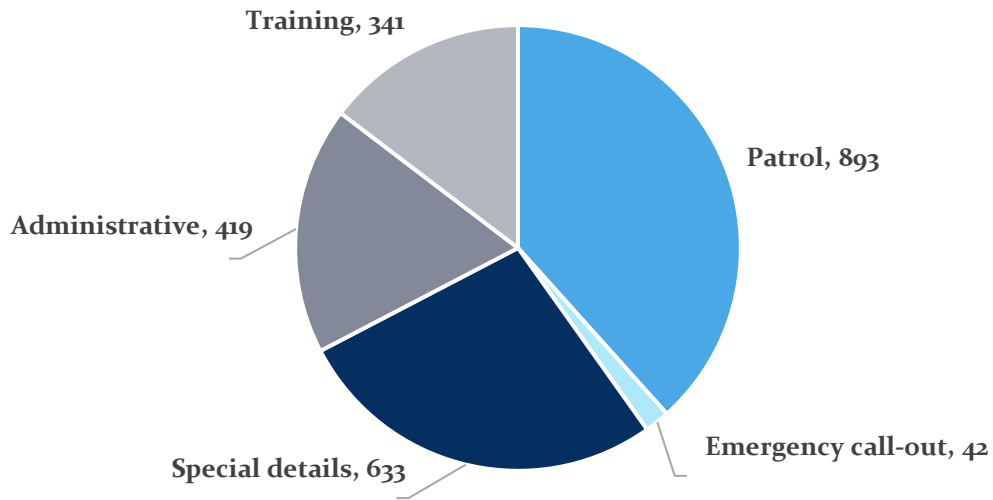
Reserve Officers provide a number of valuable support services for the City of Stow Police Department. They are non-sworn volunteers, although they do receive workers' compensation benefits and a small monthly stipend to cover expenses.

Reserve Officers regular patrol duties include: checking the homes of residents on vacation, vehicle lockouts, checking disabled vehicles, and assisting with traffic control at accidents. They also assist with weather emergencies and at special events such as high school football games, 5-K runs, trick-or-treat, Summer Sunset Blast, and the July 4th parade.

Throughout 2024, the Reserve Unit volunteered a total of 2,327 hours, which is a large increase from the number of hours in 2023 - 1,673 - and 988 hours in 2022! The majority of these hours (893) were spent out on patrol providing general assistance. During 2024, the Reserve Unit worked special details, which included Summer Sunset Blast, Metro Parks Touch-a-Truck, Stuff-a-Cruiser, Stow Fishing Derby, and the ribbon cutting for the Meadowbrook park playground re-opening. Reserve Officers also received a combined total of 285 hours of training throughout the year in areas including CPR, Taser, Rifle familiarization, OC/ASP, Traffic Control, and Defensive Tactics. They assisted as role-players for sworn officers training and for SWAT trainings as well.



RESERVE UNIT HOURS VOLUNTEERED



In 2024, Stow Mayor John Pribonic swore in several new members to the Reserve Unit, which included Reserve Officers John Robison, Brian Creemers, Allison Golubski, Myles Ashbaugh, Hannah Trimble, and Rick Thome. This brought the unit’s total number of officers up to 17.



K-9 Unit

The Stow Police Department has two K-9 teams, Ofc. Patrick Myers and K-9 Diesel. These teams are supervised and trained by Lt. Steve Miller, who is a certified Master Trainer in the State of Ohio.

K-9s are a valuable resource and a major asset to both the department and the community. Our K-9s, guided by their handlers, have been instrumental in tracking and apprehending criminal suspects, locating missing adults and children, and have seized thousands of dollars worth of illegal narcotics that pass through the city.

Ofc. Maruna & K-9 Rip

K-9 handler, Officer Kris Maruna, and his K-9 Rip, a three-year-old German Shepherd, are trained in narcotics detection, tracking, apprehension, and handler protection. They are certified in Patrol Related Testing & Special Purpose Testing through the State of Ohio & the National Association of Professional Canine Handlers. Assigned to the Afternoon Shift in 2024, Officer Maruna and K-9 Rip were deployed thirty-one times throughout the year. This included 23 deployments for detection and resulted in twelve arrests. Some of these arrests were due to the discovery of Methamphetamine and Ketamine.

One notable deployment for 2024 was a track of a male who fled from the Akron General Emergency Department to avoid arrest. K-9 Rip tracked through roads and wooded areas for 1.79 miles before ultimately finding the suspect, who was arrested and charged.





Lt. Steve Miller (far right) taking a bite from K-9 Rip during training.

Ofc. Myers & K-9 Diesel

Stow PD's K-9 team, Officer Patrick Myers & K-9 Diesel, were assigned to Day Shift in 2024. K-9 Diesel was born in December of 2016 in Wapakoneta, Ohio, at Von Der Haus Gill German Shepards. Officer Myers & K-9 Diesel have been certified since 2018 through the K-9 Academy at Von Der Haus Gill.

2024 proved to be a challenging year for Diesel and Officer Myers with the State of Ohio legalizing marijuana. Diesel could only be deployed for narcotics detection in limited circumstances, being that he is trained to detect marijuana. They still conducted several public and school demonstrations to educate those attending on the unit's capabilities. Diesel continues to be an asset to Patrol functions, as his presence alone has assisted in de-escalating potentially volatile subjects, and his tracking abilities are still top-notch.

K-9 Diesel is certified by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission, as well as the National Association of Professional Canine Handlers.



Ofc. Myers is seen here in training using a long-line lead with K-9 Diesel. This style of leash is commonly used by the handler when the K-9 is tracking.



K-9 Diesel poses with a helicopter at training held on a military base.

Crisis Intervention Team

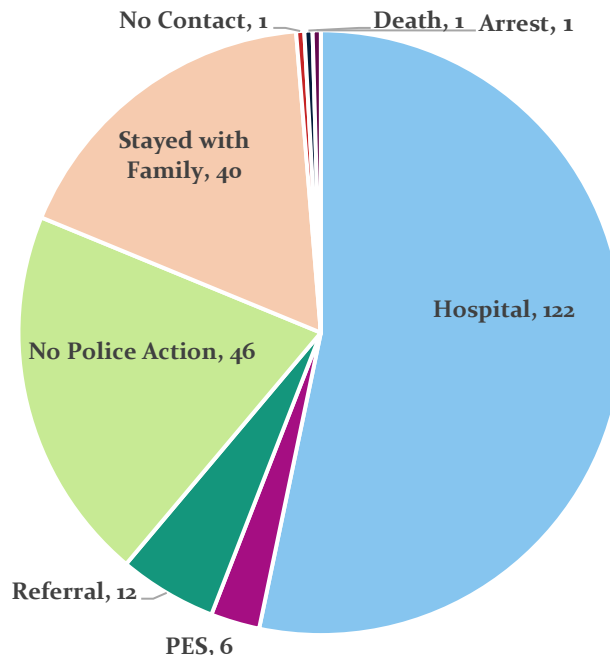
The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) at Stow PD is comprised of a group of twenty-seven (27) sworn officers who have attended forty (40) hours of specialized training to recognize and effectively respond to someone experiencing a mental health crisis. Officers routinely use techniques they have learned in order to de-escalate crises with the goal of helping to direct persons with mental illness into treatment.



In 2024 Sgt. Burgess, Officer Barbe, and Officer Davidson, were added to Stow's CIT team. Over half (52%) of Stow PD's officers assigned to patrol are CIT certified, and all of our officers have ongoing training on how to handle mental health crisis calls.

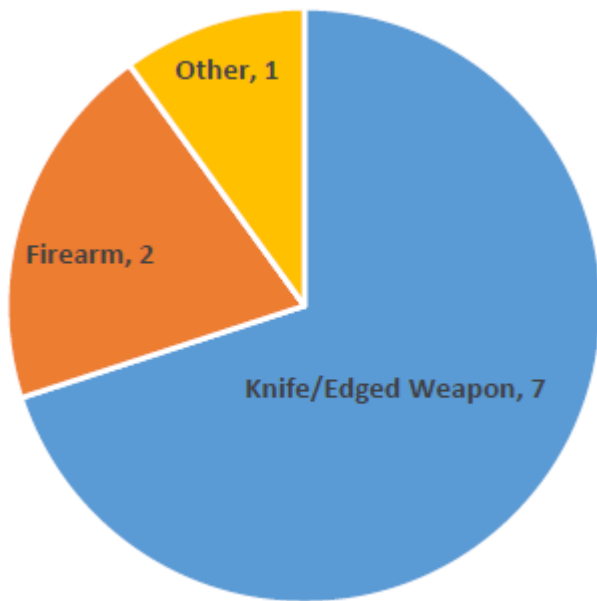
Lt. Heather Prusha is Stow PD's CIT Coordinator. She heads a steering committee comprised of Det. Ryan Schulz, Ofc. Jason Bailey, and Ofc. Patrick Myers who work together to guide our CIT program. This team publishes a CIT Annual Report, which documents how police are handling crisis calls, what types of calls we are facing, and other information about the incident. During the course of 2024, officers documented 229 calls involving a mental health crisis. This is in line with the call volume we have seen for the past five years. Out of all of the crisis calls handled in 2024, only one resulted in an arrest taking place on scene, as arrest is a last resort when handling crisis encounters. A majority of these calls (128) resulted in the subject in crisis being transported to a hospital or mental health emergency facility (PES).

Disposition of Police Responses
To CIT Calls



A family member was the most common source of calls to police during crisis calls in 2024.

Calls initiated by crisis hotline workers increased in 2024. Ohio’s Crisis Hotline “988” was fully implemented in 2023.



Out of the 229 crisis calls that Stow Officers responded to, 10 calls involved weapons.

Types of Crisis Calls

Suicidal Thought	46
Suicide Threat	32
Suicide Attempt	14
Threat to Others	11
Homicidal	2
Dementia	11
Unable to Care for Self	6
Anxiety Related	17
Psychosis	59
Depression Related	9
Developmental Disability/TBI	10
Other	1
Self-Harm (Non-suicidal)	8
Addiction Related	43

Stow Municipal Court



Officially opened in 2009, the Stow Municipal Court serves sixteen (16) communities across northeast Summit County. Cases are filed by Summit County agencies, which reside in the court's jurisdiction. In 2024, a combined total of 16,778 cases were filed in the court's traffic, criminal, and civil divisions, a total very similar to 2023. Of these filed cases, the City of Stow accounted for 17% of the total caseload. This included 667 criminal filings and 1,468 traffic filings for the City of Stow.

In 2024, the court received a grant worth approximately \$55,000 from the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services to support its mental health specialty docket (STRIDE Court).

The Stow Police Department assigns one officer to work full-time at the courthouse in conjunction with the security forces there. The court officer is responsible for ensuring the security of the building and overseeing prisoner transports. Additionally, they are tasked with ensuring the safety of the judges, magistrates, and court staff, as well as all visitors to the building.

Officer Joseph Hepler is currently assigned to the position.



Records Division

Stow Records Division is responsible for maintaining all records produced by the Stow Police Department. The division is staffed by a supervisor, three full-time records clerks, and one part-time employee. They process all criminal, incident, and crash reports, among several other police documents. They are also in charge of data entry, preparing criminal and traffic charges, maintaining the department’s property/evidence room, LEADS compliance, as well as managing video evidence for court. They greet members of the public who come into the lobby of the safety building during business hours and also manage and distribute all records requests, whether they be from the public, the media, or any other government agencies.

All members of the Records Division attend training to stay current on public records laws. Their diligent work and attention to detail are critical in helping us provide a high level of service to our community.



Pictured left to right:

Pam Schifano, April Dirker, Anne Stirm, Michelle Badgley, Cheryl Black, Marguerite Amonett

Information Flow



Stow Youth Services

Stow Youth Services (SYS) provides alternative rehabilitation for juveniles who have been arrested by local police. The SYS program diverts teens from the Juvenile Court System and provides accountability and assistance to the teens and their parents. This is a cooperative effort between the youth, parents, and SYS staff. Any juvenile who lives in the City of Stow or Munroe Falls and becomes involved with the police is eligible by referral. Walk-ins are also considered when parents need help providing the proper information to their children. The majority of juveniles are placed on a 3-month contract where they are closely monitored and given effective logical consequences to abide by. Other programs that are provided: 4-hour Mandatory Parent/Student Educational Groups, Vaping Education classes, Community Service, and Safety Town.



Kathy Christ, Dr. Samantha Pfeiffer, Toni Carter, Ron Clum



In October of 2023, we embedded Dr. Samantha Pfeiffer into our SYS program, and she continued her important work throughout 2024. Dr. Pfeiffer is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor-Supervisor and a Licensed Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor with a passion and commitment for helping adolescents who struggle with substance use and mental health concerns. Funding for Dr. Pfeiffer’s position comes from various settlements related to the opiate pandemic.

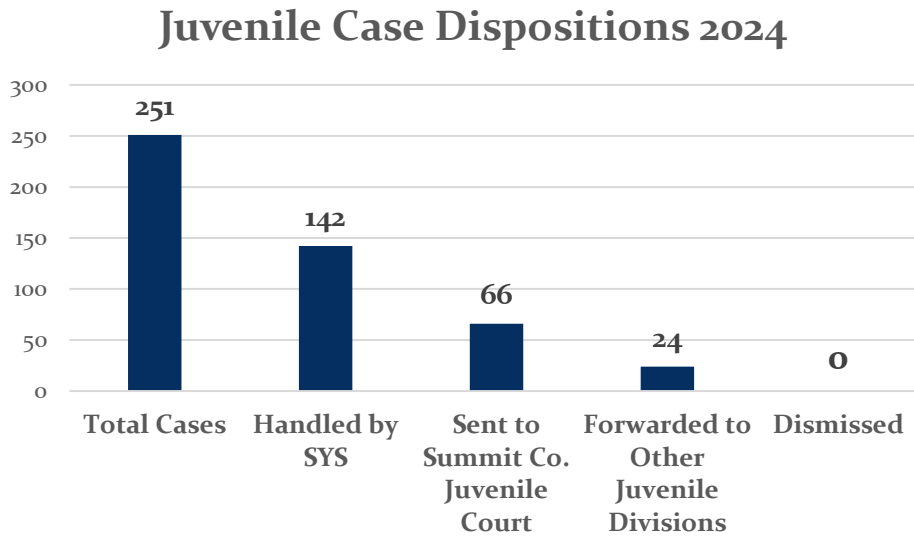
Dr. Pfeiffer provides on-site individual support for all clients affiliated with Stow Youth Services who may be at risk for or identified as having concerns regarding substance use, screening for possible substance use issues, brief intervention, consultation and referral into treatment. She is also providing education to staff, parents, and clients.

The addition of Dr. Pfeiffer to the SYS team has already proven to be a huge success in combating substance use among our youth.

In 2024, SYS dealt with 130 male juvenile offenders (67%) and 65 female juvenile offenders (33%).

The three most common offenses seen were:

1. UNRULY (CURFEW, INCORRIGIBILITY; RUNAWAY)
2. DRUG OR ALCOHOL OFFENSES
3. THEFT



Participants in the Stow Youth Services program are required to pay an initial diversion fee of \$10 upon entering the program for the first time. Stow Youth Services collected \$580 in Diversion Fees in 2024.

SYS Program Highlights and Education Efforts

In 2024, Stow Youth Services continued working with students on vape education by referring them to Dr. Pfeiffer. Dr. Pfeiffer worked with 11 students—all of whom did not re-offend with a tobacco-related incident. This program is designed to address the trend of juveniles using vaping devices. This curriculum is a two-hour class. The program is designed to make students aware of how deep their involvement is with vaping and the future consequences of continued use.

In 2024, SYS continued its partnership with the schools to address truancy issues. House Bill 410 mandates that an Absence Intervention Team (AIT) must be assembled once a student hits the criteria for being habitually truant. “Habitually truant” is defined as the absence from school without a legitimate excuse for the following number of hours: 30 or more consecutive hours; 42 or more hours in one school month; 72 or more hours in one school year. SYS is an integral part of the AIT team. The goal of the team is to educate families on the importance of having their children in school and to assist in overcoming any obstacles the family is having in getting their children to school. In 2024, SYS worked with 12 families facing truancy referrals to the Summit County Juvenile Court. Nine of those families were able to turn things around and did not receive a referral to court.

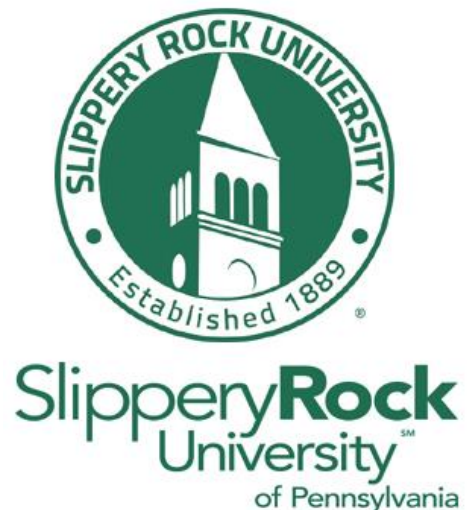
Stow Youth Services (cont.)

This year brought some interesting ways for SYS to present the amazing things going on in their department.

Global Ties Akron brought 17 global leaders from across Central America to Akron through the US State Department’s International Visitor Leadership Program. Their topic of study was Addressing the Needs of Underserved and At-Risk Youth. The visitors, along with three interpreters, came to the Stow Police Department to hear about the work Stow Youth Services does with at-risk youth. It was a great discussion, with the majority of the countries represented excited about the relationship the Stow Police Department has with the youth in our community.



Kerry Edwards, Associate Professor in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department at Slippery Rock University, heard about SYS through one of her students, who had previously interned with the Stow Police Department. Dr. Edwards invited SYS to her classroom to discuss their program while she was covering the topic of the juvenile justice system’s attempt to balance accountability and rehabilitation measures. SYS had a great time going over their program and having an open discussion with the students.



Toni Carter received the C.A.R.E. Award for the Stow-Munroe Falls School District at its annual banquet in April. Dr. Samantha Pfeiffer, the Stow Six District Coordinator who presented the award, stated, “Toni has exemplified excellence in helping students, the school, and community members in combating alcohol and drug abuse. She has devoted time and energy in creating a safe space for students to address their substance use concerns and helped promote a healthy sense of mental and emotional wellness for our students. We are forever grateful for Toni’s dedication and service to the students, schools, and our community”.



SYS Community Involvement

As usual, SYS continued to seek meaningful community service projects for youth involved in our program. Youth in the program assisted the city’s service department with various tasks, including washing equipment in the city service center, cleaning up the mulch beds around the City campus, cleaning in city parks, and setting up and tearing down picnic tables at pavilions at Silver Springs Park.

In addition to maintaining a steady flow of cases and community supervision, SYS participated in many outside community events and programs in 2024. These programs are directly related to youth safety and crime diversion and include: The Ohio Police Juvenile Officers Association (OPJOA), the Summit County Truancy Task Force, Summit County Collaborative Against Human Trafficking, Old Navy Safety Event, Chamber Leadership Day, Girl Scouts/Daisy Scouts presentations, Pop-up events in Stow Parks, Safety Town, Back to School Bash with Stow-Munroe Falls High School, Health and Wellness Fair at SMFHS, and Collaborative Meetings with Stow-Munroe Falls High School Principals and Guidance Counselors

Safety Town

In June of 2024, SYS had 145 kids, who will be entering kindergarten, come through four (4) Safety Town sessions. A total of thirteen important lessons are covered during the five-day program. Topics covered over the five days include fire safety, playground safety, dog bite prevention, seatbelt safety, weapon safety, poison safety, 9-1-1 safety, bike safety, personal safety, pedestrian safety, bus safety, weather safety, and water safety. SYS partners with other agencies, such as Akron Children’s Hospital, the Stow Munroe Falls School District, Goldfish Swim School, and Sit Means Sit Dog Training, to provide comprehensive, current instruction to the kids. Safety Town employs two full-time certified Stow-Munroe Falls school district teachers to plan and lead the daily educational process.



During 9-1-1 safety training, students were able to practice calling 9-1-1 with a realistic smartphone device donated by the Acker-Moore Memorial Post.





Stow Safety Town is coordinated by Youth Services specialist Toni Carter who works diligently for over 6 months to put on a well-loved and educational program.

Safety Town takes a village and Toni had a lot of help! There were 52 total student volunteers from 8th to 12th grade working to make the four classes possible. Our amazing volunteers are such an important part of Safety Town. They help the students by being role models for the kids to look up to and by guiding them through their daily activities. They also lead the students on tours of the Police Department, Fire Department, and during their field trip to the Safety Village and Red Park.

In June of 2024, Toni Carter was contacted by a film crew regarding the Stow Safety Village. Award-winning documentary filmmaker Patrick Hamm was making a documentary on Dorothy Chlad. Dorothy is the Founder and President of the National Safety Town Center. She is also the author of the Safety Town Books we currently use to teach important lessons. The film is described as being “an inspiring documentary that takes viewers on a journey into the heart of a program that's making a significant difference in children's safety education.” Driven by a dedicated team of filmmakers, the film explores the legacy and impact of Safety Town, a program founded by the passionate Dorothy Chlad, who is now 89 years old and continues to advocate for safety education. The production team brought Dorothy to the Stow Safety Village and filmed her talking with Toni Carter about Safety Town. We are excited to see the final production.



National Night Out

SYS is also instrumental in the planning and execution of National Night Out Against Crime (NNO). NNO is a great family event that the community loves to attend and interact with the police officers. Unfortunately, severe weather forced us to cancel the event in 2024. We are looking forward to getting together with the community in 2025.



School Crossing Guards



In addition to assisting with community involvement, SYS also oversees the Police Department’s 12 crossing guards. These crossing guards assist the students at the elementary and intermediate schools throughout Stow. SYS is responsible for scheduling, making assignments, and covering any absences at any school locations as needed.

The Stow Crossing Guards love the kids and in their time off enjoy getting together for tasty treats, including apple fritters from StowNut Donut!



Community Events

Pop-Up in the Park

In partnership with the Stow Parks Department, Pop-Up in the Park events aim to connect local neighborhoods to their police departments. In 2024, we went to several neighborhoods to offer information and fun handouts and to meet with the residents of Stow.



Back to School Bash

This was the first year the school district hosted a back to school bash at the high school and many vendors and community representatives were invited to attend. Our School Resource Officer, DARE officer, Crisis Intervention Team members and K-9 officer came along with Stow Youth Services to interact with parents and students at the well-attended event.



Fourth of July Parade

The Stow Crossing Guards rode a float in this year's parade – the community's way of saying thank you for their faithful service! Our Stow Honor Guard also marched in the parade again this year, and lead the way along with several veteran military members also carrying our nation's flag.



Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics

Each year, the Special Olympics torch passes through the City of Stow as it makes its way across the State of Ohio, proudly carried by law enforcement officers to raise funds for the Special Olympics. Hudson officers pass off the torch to Stow officers at the northern border. Stow PD then runs the torch 3.4 miles to the southern edge of the city where it is transferred to Munroe Falls officers at Adell Durbin Park to continue its journey. On June 21, 2024 Stow had 20 runners participate, and the Stow team was able to raise \$3,423.00 for the Special Olympics! This year, Officer Beganovic organized the run for Stow PD and took over the position of Northeast Ohio Leg Leader, coordinating two days of routes and runners from Painesville, OH (Lake County) all the way to Akron. He also had the opportunity to escort the Special Olympians into Ohio Stadium, affectionately known as “The Shoe” in Columbus, OH, at the conclusion of the final leg of the run.



Operation Chill



Officers once again partnered up with 7-Eleven to enact Operation Chill. This community outreach program is designed to reduce crime and enhance relations between police and youth. Operation Chill allows law enforcement officers to “ticket” kids they observe doing good deeds or exhibiting positive behavior. The ticket is actually a coupon good for a free Slurpee from 7-Eleven. In addition to encouraging positive behaviors like wearing bicycle helmets, doing good deeds,

participating in community activities and organizations, picking up trash, deterring crime, or observing street crossing rules, the Operation Chill Program offers opportunities for officers to establish a rapport with kids in a neighborhood. Though the reasons for being “ticketed” may vary, the end result is the same for every youngster: a free Slurpee drink and a smile for a good deed.

No Shave No Trim WishVember



From November through February, male officers can elect to grow facial hair outside of the normal clean-shaven uniform policy. Participating officers must donate a minimum of \$25 to various charities for each month of participation. This year, we kicked off the event with “No Shave No Trim WishVember” which is a program put on by A Special Wish Northeast Ohio Chapter whose mission is to grant wishes to local children who have been diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. This was followed by donations to Shop With a Cop in December, the Safety Forces Support Center in January, and the Ohio Special Olympics Torch Run in February.

Shop with a Cop



The Stow Police Department continues to be an active participant in the annual Shop with a Cop (SWAC) event. SWAC gives the police an opportunity to connect and build strong, trusting relationships with children in our community. It also gives families that are struggling financially an opportunity to shop for toys and gifts to help make the season brighter.

This year, Kimpton Middle School in Munroe Falls hosted 11 police agencies and 158 children for breakfast with Santa and their favorite Disney princesses and superheroes. Breakfast was donated by many local restaurants and businesses.

After breakfast, the children were transported to the Stow Target via all different types of police and SWAT vehicles. Thanks to generous donations from local citizens and businesses, Stow Police were able to provide \$300 Target gift cards to 34 Stow children to shop for Christmas gifts for themselves and their families but the program as a whole raised over \$37,000. Each family was also given multiple gift cards to different restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, and places of entertainment courtesy of an anonymous Stow resident.



2024 Personnel

Sworn Officers

Chief Jeffrey E. Film

Captain Bryan J. Snavely

Lieutenant Heather M. Prusha

Lieutenant Stephen W. Miller

Lieutenant Erik N. Dirker

Lieutenant Theodore L. Bell

Sergeant Kasey L. Olesinski

Sergeant Jeffrey A. Breznak*

Sergeant Justin M. Burgess

Sergeant John L. Ginther

Sergeant Daniel N. Drummond*

Sergeant Brett M. Balog

Sergeant Jacob D. Corfman

Sergeant Kevin R. Smith

Detective Edith F. Gaffney

Detective Nicholas F. Dolezal

Detective Michael B. Murphy

Detective Stephen J. Heim

Detective Ryan M. Schulz

Officer Joseph J. Hepler

Officer Barry C. Smith*

Officer Robert S. Molody

Officer Brian R. Haddix

Officer Jesse J. Reedy

Officer Justin C. Smith

Officer Robert D. Frisina

Officer Jason L. Bailey

Officer Edward J. Wonner

Officer Bethany M. Childers

Officer Patrick R. Myers

Officer Jacob M. Pajestka

Officer Samuel J. Williams

Officer Christian M. Musarra

Officer Taylor N. Paxton

Officer Kristopher J. Maruna

Officer Christopher B. Demars

Officer Dylan M. Gabel

Officer Samantha R. Wike*

Officer Eldin Beganovic

Officer Nicholas J. Flasco

Officer Shawn M. Baker

Officer Antonio M. Johnson

Officer Alonte O. Williams

Officer Robert J.S. Simone*

Officer Maria A. Kisha*

Officer Dana L. Lyberger

Officer Tristen D. Kidd

Officer Nathan J. Farrell

Officer Christina P. Barbe

Officer Ellie K. Davidson

*Retired or Resigned in 2024

Reserve Unit

Captain Tom Sedor

Lieutenant Alisha Greenawalt-Johnson

Sergeant Michael Dolbow

Sergeant Gregory Hunter

Officer Brad Hough

Officer Madison Rutherford

Officer Anthony Villanueva

Officer John Robison

Officer Will Kalkhoff

Officer Brian Creemers

Officer Mitchell Parker

Officer Allison Golubski

Officer Richard Dennis

Officer Myles Ashbaugh

Officer Martin Ashbaugh

Officer Hannah Trimble

Officer Rick Thome

Civilian Staff

Chief's Office

Supervisor: Marguerite Amonett

Community Service Officer

Edward Young

Records Division

Supervisor: Cheryl Black

Michelle Badgley

Pamela Schifano

April Dirker

Stow Youth Services

Supervisor: Kathy Christ

Toni Carter

Ron Clum

Dr. Samantha Pfeiffer



*This 2024 Annual Report was compiled by:
Capt. Bryan Snavelly & Lt. Heather Prusha*



Stow Police Department

INTEGRITY COMMITMENT SERVICE

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