

# **BRANFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Analysis and Overview of the Growing Demands on Police Services  
Proposal for Hiring of Two (2) Additional Full Time Officers



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Branford Police Department has maintained 52 full-time sworn officers since 2004. Since then, the demands driving the need for more officers has significantly increased. Legislative changes including expanded administrative responsibilities of officers for reporting, increased need for more officers on calls for safety and reduction in use of force incidents, and an overall victim-centered approach, have led to longer times on calls for service. This benchmark of length of time spent on calls is reliable data to support the need for additional police officers. In addition, mental health calls for service, domestic violence calls for service, violent crime trends, property crime trends, and overdoses have increased in Branford over the past decade. Not only do these needs continue to increase, but also the police department during this time has not been operating at "full staff". There is a continuous revolving cycle of hiring, officers out on injury, officers on light-duty status, maternity/FMLA leave, or officer retirement.

The Branford community expects a rapid and professional response to calls for service and the ability for officers to proactively patrol, deter, and intercept crimes in progress. To provide the best possible service in coordination with our mission statement, increasing our staffing to 54 full-time sworn officers would improve service to the Branford community.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Branford Police Department is to serve and protect the community through the delivery of progressive police services. It is our commitment to service and adherence to our values of honor, integrity and trust that allows us to earn, build and maintain the essential support of our community.

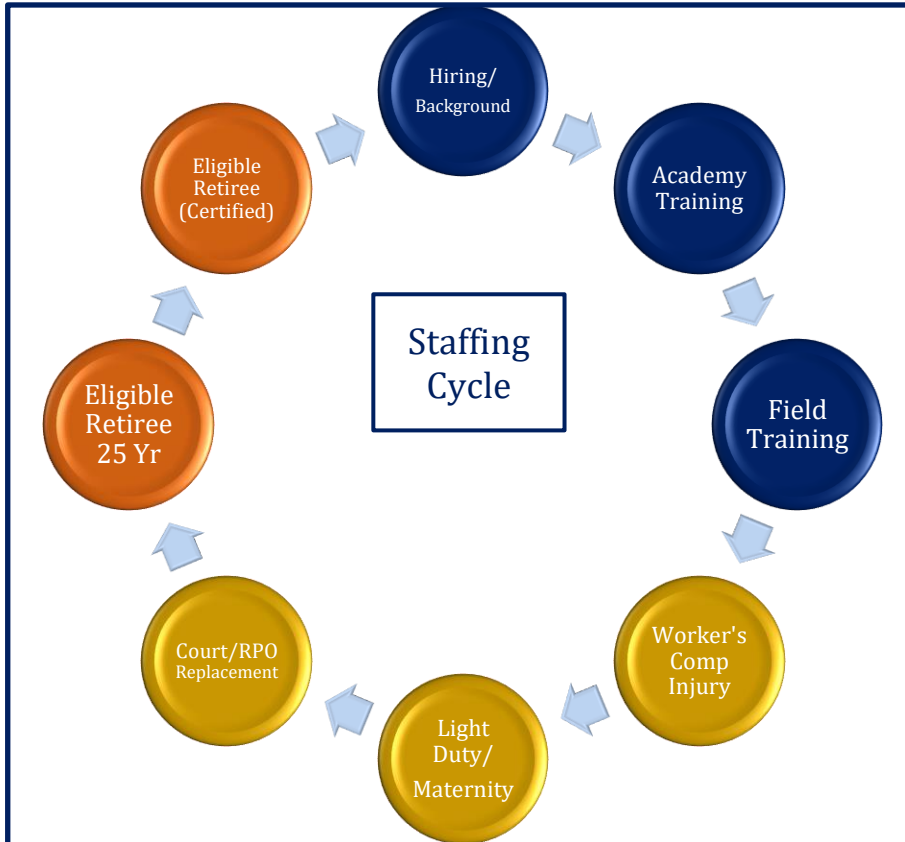
*November 15, 2023*

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## PROCESS OF HIRING NEW OFFICERS

Although Branford Police currently is budgeted for 52 full-time sworn personnel, we cannot maintain minimum staffing. The staffing cycle chart below indicates ongoing recurrences of (yearly) recruitment, officers out due to injury or maternity, and retirement. It is important to note that based on Branford Police's recruitment and hiring efforts, the length of time to hire a new police officer, from the time they apply, to the time they are independently performing their assigned duties, is **over 12 months**. It takes approximately 3 months for the Physical Agility, Written Exam, Oral Board Interview, Chief's Interview, Background Investigation, Polygraph, Psychological Exam, Medical Exam, and Police Commissioner's Interview. Then, approximately 6.5 months attending the police academy, lastly approximately 3 months on Field Training.



As of the new fiscal year (2023/2024), there will be **6 Officers eligible for retirement**, and **6 with the possibility of retiring** because they completed a 20–25-year previous police career.

With the new year approaching, **12 officers have the ability to retire with over a year turnaround for replacement.**

**Since 2004, Branford Police have not added any full time sworn personnel to the roster.**

Currently, we have met the personnel capacity at 52 officers. However, we have 1 Officer assigned to Risk Protection Unit (see page 9), 4 in the Police Academy, 1 out of service on Worker's Comp Injury, and 1 on Maternity/Light Duty. That is 45/52, or **approximately 86% staffed**, which is commonplace and consistent with past years.

## OVERVIEW OF GROWING DEMANDS ON POLICE SERVICES

### **AN INCREASE OF DEMANDS**

- ↑ Requirements and Changes Effecting Police Response and Responsibilities
- ↑ Training Demands by Legislature, Police Officer Standards and Training Council, CALEA
- ↑ Mental Health Calls for Service, Domestic Violence Calls for Service, Property Crimes
- ↑ Overdoses – Opioid Epidemic
- ↑ Administrative Services such as Fingerprinting, Pistol Permits, Car Seat Installation
- ↑ More Compliance for Best Practices Including De-escalation, Lower Use of Force Incidents, Increased Number of Officers on Call, Supervisor Response to Scene.

## OVERVIEW OF GROWING DEMANDS ON POLICE SERVICES CONTINUED

According to IACP,  
2019 Survey<sup>1</sup>

### A DECREASE OF STAFFING/RETENTION

- ↓ Police Recruitment and Retention is at an all-time low nationwide.
- ↓ Branford Police Staffing (Never at Full Staff)
- ↓ Officers Out of Service due to Worker's Comp, Injury, Maternity
- ↓ Eligibility of Retirement
- ↓ Replacement of Officer assigned as Risk Protection Order Liaison/Court



According to a 2019 Survey conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, which included response from 33,000 members, the results highlighted:



*“Beyond the challenges of identifying and hiring qualified recruits, the survey also shined a light on how **consistent understaffing of an agency taxes existing resources and personnel**. Of even greater concern was the impact that the recruitment crisis, and the related understaffing of agencies, is having on the ability of agencies to provide certain services, units, or positions because of staffing difficulties.”<sup>1</sup>*

In addition, it has been challenging for many agencies to reach or maintain 100% of their staffing levels and research shows that operating below authorized staffing levels leads to low officer morale and job satisfaction.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there has been an increase in the raw number of law enforcement jobs, but the growth in the U.S. Population has led to a slow decline in the ratio of residents to police officers. As a result of this, **officers are responsible for serving more people, with fewer resources.**<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that since 2019, Branford Police Department has hired and retained 19 full time sworn officers. Hiring for replacement of retirement is a continuous process. It is also important to mention that we have not lowered our standards; that we have hired the best applicants for the position.

Moreover, we have interviewed 109 *certified police officer* applicants since 2019 and have only hired 10. In the IACP Study previously mentioned, *“50% of agencies reported having to change policies in order to increase the chances of gaining qualified applicants.”*<sup>3</sup>

**We have not changed our policies or lowered our standards.** We hire based on the most qualified applicant who exemplifies our core values of honor, integrity, and trust.

<sup>1</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, “The State of Recruitment: A Crisis for Law Enforcement”, [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416\\_IACP\\_RecruitmentBR\\_HR\\_0.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416_IACP_RecruitmentBR_HR_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, “Police and Detectives,” Occupational Outlook Handbook, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/protective-service/police-and-detectives.htm>

<sup>3</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, “The State of Recruitment: A Crisis for Law Enforcement”, [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416\\_IACP\\_RecruitmentBR\\_HR\\_0.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416_IACP_RecruitmentBR_HR_0.pdf)

## CURRENT STAFFING

FULL-TIME STAFFING	
Sworn Positions	Personnel
Chief of Police	1
Deputy Chief of Police	1
Captains	2
Lieutenants	4
Sergeants	7
Detectives	5
Patrol	32

EMPLOYEES HIRED DURING THE 2022/2023 FISCAL YEAR:

**Full Time Sworn:**

Four (4) Patrol Officers

Full Time Non-Sworn:

Full Time Records Assistant

Manager of Crime Research, Police Accreditation and Special Projects

Dispatcher

*(Includes DEA Officer)*

Non-Sworn Positions	Personnel
Dispatchers	10
Administrative Coordinator	1
Crime Analyst	1
Records Clerk	1
Social Worker	1

Part Time Non-Sworn:

Supernumerary

Two (2) Crossing Guards

Records Clerk

EMPLOYEES RETIRED/RESIGNED/DISCHARGED:

**Sworn:**

Police Detective

Non-Sworn:

Full Time Records Assistant

Crime Analyst

Supernumerary

Dispatcher

PART-TIME STAFFING	
Part-Time Positions	Personnel
Records Clerks	3
Crossing Guards	9
Supernumeraries	5

The above and below charts from the 2022/2023 Annual Report indicate the current departmental and staffing overview. Additional information regarding the Table of Organization can be found in Appendix A.

With these two additional officers, one is to replace the Risk Protection Officer, and the second would be a single addition to patrol staffing. The below chart indicates the 2022/2023 fiscal year staffing demographics as prepared by the Crime Analysis Office.

DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS - FULL TIME PERSONNEL								
SWORN POSITIONS	White Non-Hispanic		Black Non-Hispanic		Hispanic Any Race		Other	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Command Staff	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Supervisory	6	3	1	1	-	-	-	-
Non-Supervisory	30	4	-	1	1	1	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
NON-SWORN POSITIONS								
Dispatchers	4	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
All Other Full-Time Civilians	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## RESPONSE TO DIMINISHED STAFFING LEVELS AND INCREASED DEMANDS

Several changes have been made to adjust to the diminished staffing levels and increased demands. Two traffic officers were assigned back to the Patrol Division and a rotating position within the Detective Division was halted. The rotating Detective position was an important assignment as it helped develop our patrol officers while simultaneously providing staffing support to our Detective Division.

The Department has also used our Records Clerks to help process and file fraud/ID Theft complaints. This helps reduce the in-person sworn police officer response to selected calls for service. Although limited in scope, the utilization of non-sworn personnel is cost effective and helps increase the availability of officers for calls for service.

Currently, Branford Officers work a 5 days on / 2 days off (5/2) schedule with the days off being set. The overall schedule and the set days off are pursuant to the police collective bargaining agreement. This schedule arrangement does not evenly distribute personnel across a seven-day period. Additionally, this schedule is outdated and no longer the industry standard. This schedule is not favorably viewed by perspective new and certified officers. It would be beneficial to pursue a contemporary schedule such as 5/2/5/3. This change would require negotiation with the police union and would result in increased operating budget costs. However, it would lead to a more appropriate personnel deployment and help strengthen recruitment and retention of officers.

## COMPARATIVE NUMBERS IN POLICE PERSONNEL

It has been argued that officer-per-population is not a reliable method for assessing adequate personnel numbers, however, it is still widely used when comparing police departments and staffing levels. The number of full-time sworn officers of the department per 1,000 residents of the population is calculated.

The average annual rate of police personnel across Connecticut for 1,000 people in 2020 was **2.10**. The population of Branford in 2020 was 28,270. **4 This would equate to around 59 officers (currently 52) for Branford Police Department based on the state average.**

Police Agency	Population	Number of Officers	Ratio per 1,000 Residents
Branford	28,270	52	1.83
East Haven	27,920	62	2.22
North Haven	24,250	56	2.31
Westport	27,427	62	2.26
Farmington	26,728	57	2.13
<i>Average</i>		<i>57.8</i>	<i>2.15</i>

South Central Regional Departments with similar populations are shown in yellow. Other Connecticut agencies shown in orange have similar population sizes yet are higher staffed.<sup>5</sup>

The data table above shows that increasing our staffing numbers would be consistent both regionally as well as statewide with other police department personnel trends.

<sup>4</sup> Police Officers in Connecticut Statistics (2010-2019) By: George Miles, Associate Attorney December 8, 2020, | 2020-R-0316 (Office of Legislative Research)

<sup>5</sup> Connecticut Demographics, "Connecticut Cities by Population" [https://www.connecticut-demographics.com/cities\\_by\\_population](https://www.connecticut-demographics.com/cities_by_population)

## OVERVIEW OF ON-DUTY TIME AND DEMANDS

With continual legislative updates, POSTC Training and Policy Updates, Public Act Updates Annually, CALEA Training and Policy Updates, Officers must complete mandatory requirements, which would not otherwise fulfill a full training day, while on duty. An example of this would be roll call training with new changes in public acts, a policy revision with review and signature, or a 1-hour training through an online portal that is required annually.

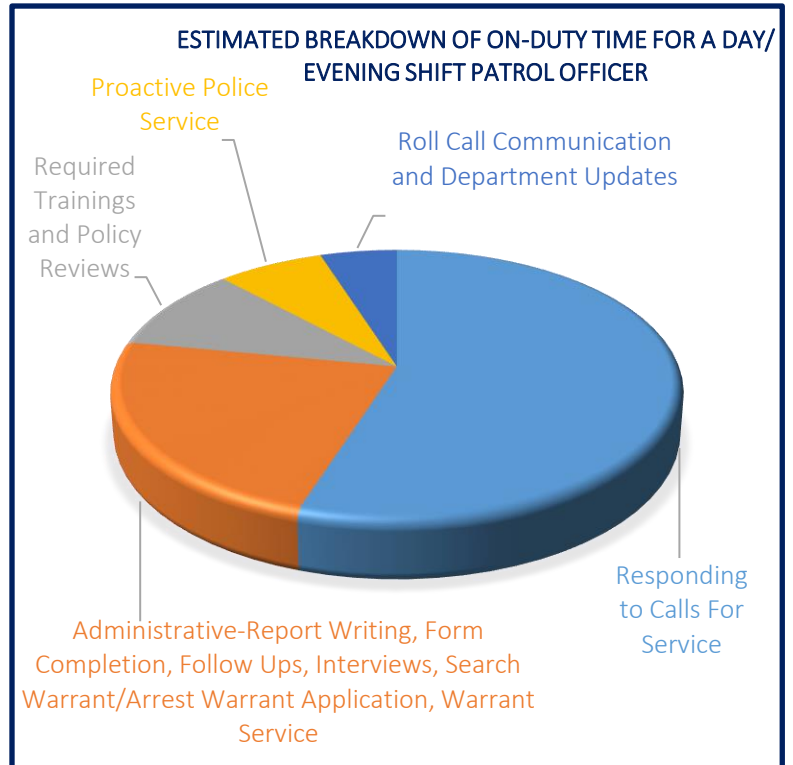
In addition to this, officers are required to undergo Mental Health Wellness checks every five years (approximately 11 per year) and submit to Urinalysis Drug and Steroid Screenings during recertification (approximately 20 officers per year), which requires replacement of officers.

The chart on the right illustrates an estimated breakdown of on-duty time for a patrol officer on day shift or evening shift.

At the top is Roll Call Communications, which is a short duration, but incredibly important for officer safety, community updates, review of previous shift incidents, and general information that each officer needs to be aware of.

Response to calls for service makes up most of the shift, and administrative functions as indicated below also take up a great deal of the officer's time. This limits the amount of time allocated for proactive police services such as traffic stops and/or community engagement, which are essential functions of police work.

Supervisors are also tasked with many administrative duties including reports and forms review, evaluations, and reviews of performance during each 2-month scheduling period, intake of citizen complaints as well as their required supervision of the shift occurrences.



## TRAINING NEEDS OF DEPARTMENT-REPLACEMENT OF OFFICERS ON TRAINING

Branford Police completes on duty training however, some training is required in person and/or takes additional hours and cannot be completed during shift. There are countless training courses requiring documentation to maintain the 183 standards of compliance for CALEA. In addition, each officer is required by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC) to complete 60 Credits Every Three-Year Training Cycle. This includes electives and mandated courses such as Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Legal Update, Juvenile Law, Patrol Procedures, many others, as well as **annual trainings below**:

- Body Worn Cameras
- Serious Mental Health
- Human Trafficking
- Use of Force Update
- Firearms, both Range and Classroom
- Taser
- COLLECT System
- Incident Command System
- Bloodborne Pathogens,
- Intoxilyzer (DUI)
- Bias Based Policing
- Bi-ennial Less Lethal Weapon Systems (OC/Handcuff/Baton)
- Bi-ennial Pursuit Review

The training regimen includes one full week of recertification training once every 3 years (about 20 officers per year). The officers additionally complete specialty trainings such as SWAT (assigned officers twice per month), Accident Reconstruction, Crisis Negotiation Team Training, and Crime Scene Trainings for Detectives. These mentioned are not inclusive of all courses but provide an overview of what is required to continue certification, electives, and the frequent likelihood of backfilling for officers removed from patrol to attend training.

## ANALYSIS OF TIME SPENT AND OFFICERS NEEDED ON CALLS FOR SERVICE

	Average of On Scene Minutes	Average Number of PD Units
<b>2010 ALL CALLS</b>	25.41	1
<b>2015 ALL CALLS</b>	31.94	2
<b>2022 ALL CALLS</b>	36.05	2
<b>2010-2022 % Change</b>	<b>41.87%</b>	<b>Increase of 1 Officer</b>
<b>2010 MENTAL HEALTH CALLS</b>	33.52	3
<b>2015 MENTAL HEALTH CALLS</b>	41.86	3
<b>2022 MENTAL HEALTH CALLS</b>	51.98	4
<b>2010-2022 % Change</b>	<b>55.07%</b>	<b>Increase of 1 Officer</b>
<b>2010 DOMESTICS</b>	46.68	3
<b>2015 DOMESTICS</b>	61.66	4
<b>2022 DOMESTICS</b>	66.07	4
<b>2010-2022 % Change</b>	<b>41.54%</b>	<b>Increase of 1 Officer</b>

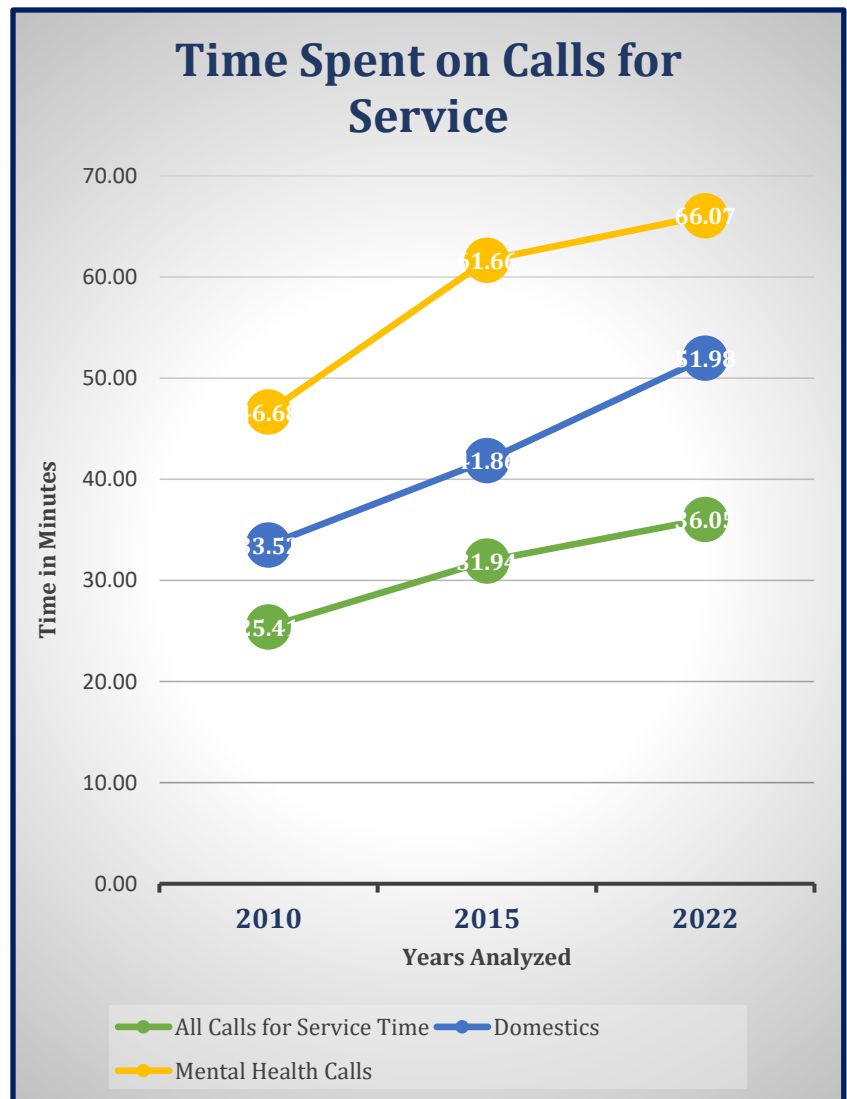
The data table and graph reflect total minutes (and officers) on Calls for Service.

This is attributed to additional responsibilities by officers on scene as well as completion of forms and reporting.

The limitation of this data does not include "Follow Up", which is when an officer assigns themselves to a case to conduct additional administrative business. These only show the initial officers on scene time during a call for service.

From 2010-2022, there was nearly a **42% increase** in time officers spent on scene for all calls for service. From 2010-2023, the officers on-scene time increased **55%** for Mental Health calls and over **41%** for Domestic Violence Calls.

Also, the number of officers on scene increased by one for each of these call types. Both domestic disputes and mental health calls for service can be unpredictable and it is important we approach these incidents with additional officers for everyone's safety as well as better service to the community.





## FOLLOW UP AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES NOT INCLUDED IN TIME ON SCENE

Follow up as mentioned above includes but is not limited to interviewing, investigation, intelligence gathering, search warrant application, search warrant results, and arrest warrant application.

It is important to note the following Search Warrant Application totals per years:

2010: 24, 2011: 16, 2012: 11, 2013: 23, 2014: 24, 2015: 22, 2016: 26, 2017: 26, 2018: 28, 2019: 37, 2020: 30, 2021: 34, 2022: 39, 2023 to date 11/09: 46. **This is a 52% increase since 2010 in Search Warrant Applications.** Intelligence gathering and technology has advanced for higher solvability and need for search warrant application in criminal cases.

Search Warrants are time-consuming to prepare and require *two* officers to present probable cause for a search and *appear in person before a Judge*. Once signed, the officers must execute the Search Warrant, tag evidence, process evidence, provide notice to the respondent, and complete reports of their findings.

The results of a Search Warrant can lead to an Arrest Warrant Application which also takes additional time to prepare, submit to court, and then locate the suspect and serve the Arrest Warrant. All the while completing reports each step of the way, documenting all efforts in the investigation.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE CALLS FOR SERVICE

Over the last three fiscal years, the Branford Police responded to an average of 442 domestic disputes each year. There were 463 domestic incidents in 2022/2023, which is a 15% increase compared to the previous fiscal year.<sup>6</sup>

Call Type	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	3-yr Average	% Chg from Average	% Chg from 2021/2022
Family Dispute	389	299	331	340	-3%	11%
Family Violence	47	78	104	76	36%	33%
Family Violence-Vio. Court Order	N/A	24	28	26	8%	17%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>15%</b>

In addition to more calls for service as indicated above, the significant increase of time on calls is necessary and attributed to fulfilling both legislative requirements and essential service to victims. Around 2014, a Lethality Assessment was introduced where officers on scene of intimate partner violence incidents must complete an 11 Question Screening, contact a Victim Advocate, and develop a safety plan with the victim. Officers stay on scene while the victim speaks to the advocate and answers follow-up questions they may have.

It is important to mention that for several reasons, but especially prisons/jails at capacity and courts not imposing penalties for non-bond payment, many offenders are released from court on a Promise to Appear (no bond) and police receive follow up calls that the offender is violating the Conditions of Release and/or Protective/Restraining Order set by court.

Family Violence incidents involving firearms seizure require additional duties of officers. They must locate and secure the firearms, ensure the firearms are properly registered and not stolen or used in a crime, and secure the firearms at headquarters. The officer determines based on probable cause if the firearm is seized as evidence or for safekeeping, or separate and apart, could be seized if the individual is subject to a Restraining or Protective Order, or a Risk Protection Order. In most cases, officers must complete extensive forms for Compliance, Surrender, Evidence Submission, and documentation.

In addition, patrol shifts receive notification from the Special Licensing and Firearms Unit to seize weapons that are registered and/or unregistered to those who are ineligible to possess them. This could be relevant to a case outside of this jurisdiction where the individual lives in Branford, or for a civil order that is non-criminal. These types of calls for service take a great deal of time to complete and document accordingly.

<sup>6</sup> Branford Police Office of Crimes Analysis and Special Projects, Calls for Service Time Including Mental Health and Family Violence Analysis, 2010-2022

## MENTAL HEALTH CALLS FOR SERVICE

In August 2021, the Branford Police Department added a Police Social Worker, and the services have been highly successful. As of November 2023, officers have made 1,940 referrals to the Mental Health Services Division where follow up is conducted by Social Worker Suraci. ***That's approximately 72 referrals per month.***

After COVID, there was a **31%** increase in mental health-related emergency department visits; Among U.S. young adults (aged 18-25): 1 in 3 experienced a mental illness; 1 in 10 experienced a serious mental illness; 3.8 million had serious thoughts of suicide; 1 in 5 young people report that the pandemic had a significant negative impact. Other stats they provided:

- 1 in 15 U.S adults experienced both a substance use disorder and mental illness.
- 12+ million U.S adults had serious thoughts of suicide.
- 1 in 5 U.S adults report that the pandemic had a significant negative impact on their mental health.
  - Among U.S. adults who received mental health services: 17.7 million experienced delays or cancellations in appointments, 7.3 million experienced delays in getting prescriptions, 4.9 million were unable to access needed care
- 26.3 million U.S adults received virtual mental health services in the past year.

Access to treatment is severely limited:

- Among U.S adults in nonmetropolitan areas, 2020: 48% with a mental illness, 62% with a serious mental illness received treatment<sup>7</sup>

An example of the overwhelmed medical system in Branford/New Haven County: At the end of October, an individual was sent on a Police Request for Emergency Evaluation due to a person being **gravely disabled/risk to self** by overdose. This person was sent to the hospital at 4:46pm. There was approximately 23 minutes including the response and on the call time (3 Officers). The individual was released from the hospital, was back at the residence, and **overdosed again** in the same night, right before 10:00p.m. Approximately 50 minutes including response and on the call time (3 Officers). This individual was sent again to the hospital on a Police Request for Emergency Evaluation.

## MENTAL HEALTH - RISK PROTECTION ORDERS – RISK PROTECTION ORDER LIAISON OFFICER

In June 2022, there was a legislative change requiring anyone who was an imminent risk to self and/or others, that a Risk Protection Investigation be completed so they can be “Red Flagged” and can be disqualified from purchasing and/or obtaining a firearm. This requires judicial review of an officer’s prepared documents as well as seizure/surrender of any possessed firearms and/or ammunition, as well as appearance for the hearing as the respondent has the right to dispute going onto the list.

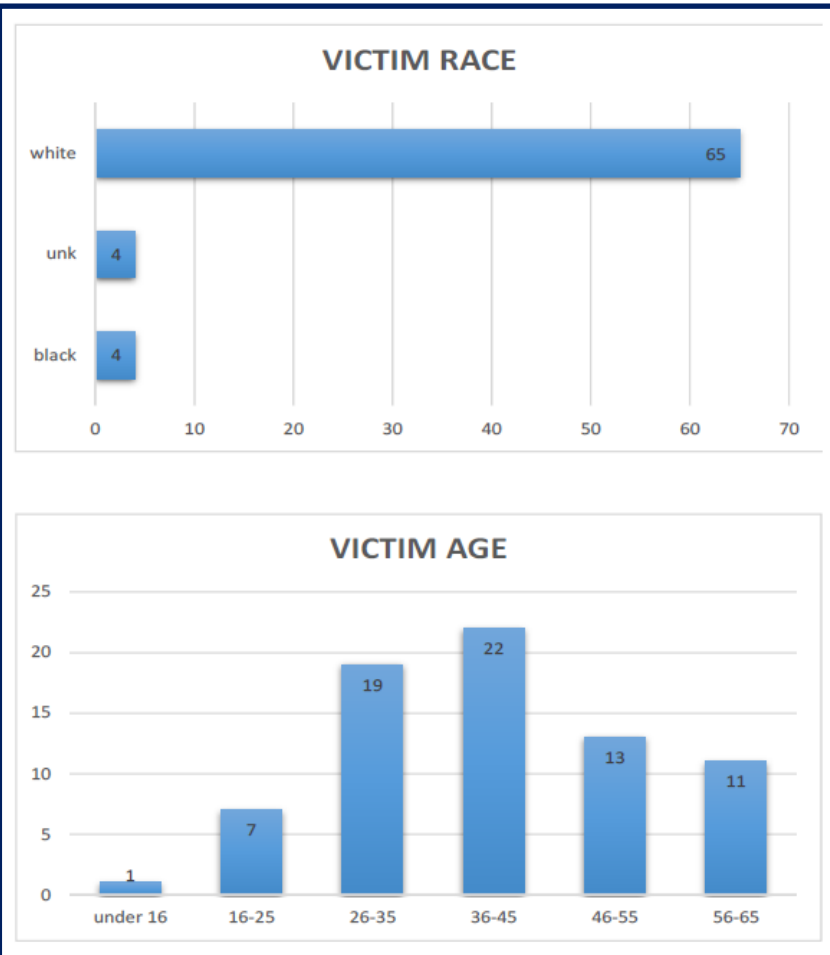
Between October 1, 2023, to March 1, 2023, scheduling was significantly impacted because of Risk Protection Orders stemming from the June 2022 Bill. This includes but not limited to extra time on cases to investigate/prepare the RPO, judicial review, service, and execution of the RPO, and subpoenas for RPO Hearings. A review was conducted of a five-month period based on Patrol A OT Rate (60.87) and 246.75 hours of OT spent, BPD had spent approximately \$15,019.67 in overtime due to RPO’s. The limitation to the review was many officers take Comp Time instead of OT. Estimated at a little less than half—maybe 40% or so, the \$15,000k number plus what officers received in Comp Earned, it was estimating the possible impact on budget in a five-month period was \$27,000.

Command Staff made the decision to remove an officer from patrol to supplement the issue in officers completing this administrative function which included lengthy preparation of Risk Protection Order Search Warrants, review with a Prosecutor, review in presence of a Judge, RPO service to the Respondent, setting a hearing date, attending (being subpoenaed for) the hearing at court, and completing additional supplemental documentation. **Between November 9, 2022, and November 9, 2023, there were 232 RPO reviews, applications, and/or follow ups requiring officer involvement. There were 123 occurrences of Officers being subpoenaed for court.**

<sup>7</sup> NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, “Mental Health by the Numbers, 2023”,  
<https://nami.org/mhstats#Mental%20Health%20Care%20Matters>

## OVERDOSES AND OPIOID CRISIS

The following report examines drug overdose trends in Branford for the calendar year of 2022. The information in this report was derived from the Branford Police Department's in-house system, through the collation and analysis of call-for-service data and case incident reports. Consequently, this report includes only drug overdose incidents reported to police. In 2022 there were 73 reported overdoses, up from 49 in 2021 (**49% increase**). Of the 73 overdoses this year, 15 were fatal.



### NON-FATAL OVERDOSES

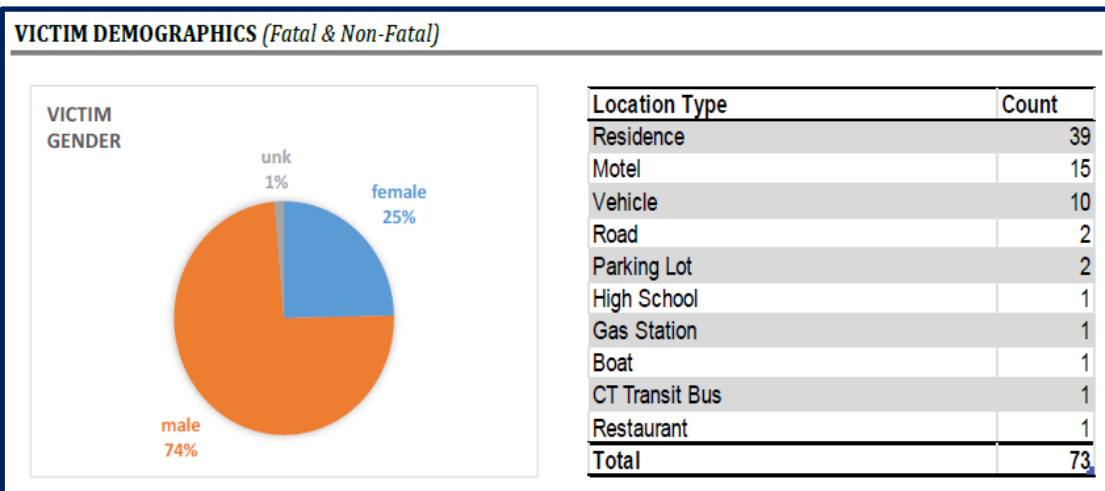
A total of **58** overdoses in 2022 (79%) were non-fatal. The number of reported non-fatal overdoses increased from 38 in 2021 (**53% increase**). According to the data available in the incident reports, heroin and unknown/unknown opioid were the most common drug types. It should be noted that the type of drug is not always known at the scene or at the time the incident report is written. 27 of the non-fatal overdoses occurred in a residence, followed by 13 at a motel/hotel and 10 in a vehicle.

### FATAL OVERDOSES

A total of **15** overdoses in 2022 (21%) were fatal. The number of reported fatal overdoses increased from 11 in 2021 (36% increase). 14 out of the 15 fatal overdoses involved fentanyl. 12 of the 15 fatal overdoses occurred in a residence, followed by 2 in a motel/hotel and 1 on a boat.

### NARCAN USE

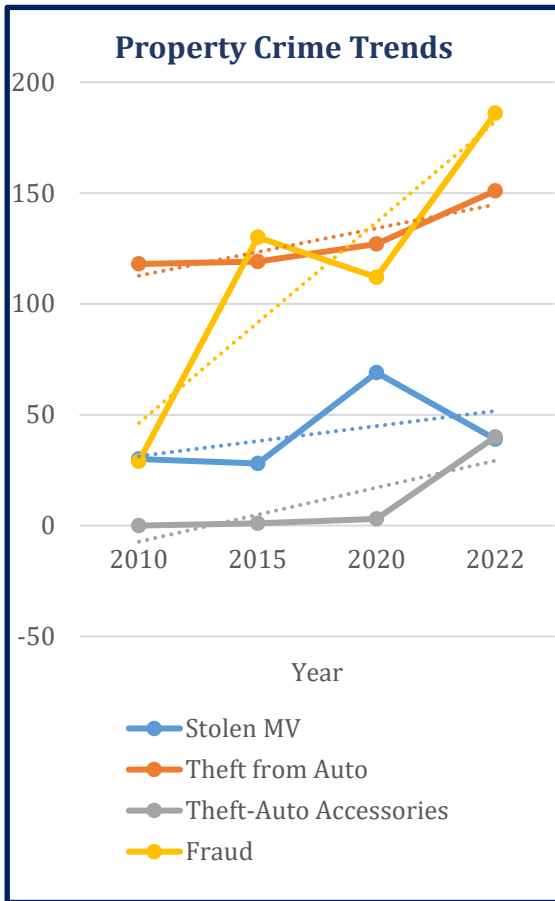
Of the 73 drug overdose incidents in 2022, the use of Narcan was cited in 37 cases. It should be noted that this number is based on police reports where Narcan use was directly stated.



In many instances, the Fire Department/EMS arrived on scene first and may have administered Narcan to the victim prior to police arrival. It is likely that this number is higher than 37. Details regarding who administered Narcan are as follows: Police: 14, Fire: 14, Victim Acquaintance (prior to police/fire arrival): 8, Unknown: 1<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Branford Police Office of Crimes Analysis and Special Projects, Opioid Epidemic and Overdose Analysis, 2022

## PROPERTY CRIME TRENDS



Property crimes such as Theft of Vehicles, Theft from Vehicles, and Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts have been on the rise over the last 10 years.

Also on the rise is Fraud, due to advancements with technology and computer capabilities. In addition, many people are working remotely due to the aftermath of COVID-19.

The Branford Police Department has mitigated the nearly **540% increase in Fraud cases** by utilizing the Records Division Personnel to document and report on cases that otherwise wouldn't require additional investigation. Specifically, Unemployment Fraud, which during 2022-2023 has been incredibly high. In fact, the Records Staff have completed 27 reports for residents over the last four months so officers can continue to patrol and/or don't have to return to headquarters, making them more available for calls.

This is not the case for thefts of motor vehicles and thefts from motor vehicles and/or parts. Officers do respond to these incidents and take all measures to thoroughly investigate. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of these thefts include the keys left in the vehicle, making it easily accessible to steal. Theft from vehicles also have higher likelihood when individuals leave valuables in plain sight.

A high number of these property crimes are being committed by juveniles, which there are minimal penalties offenders since the crime is non-violent.

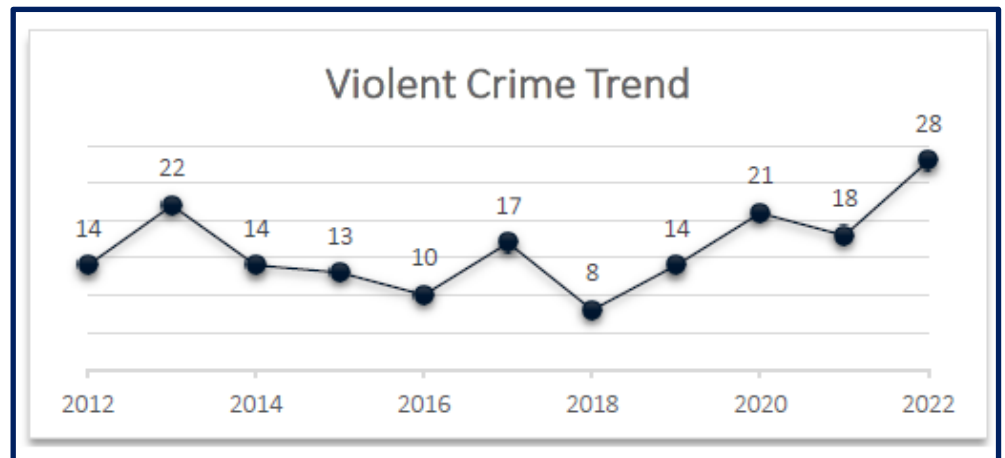
There are many factors that contribute to the increase in property crime. Due to changes in pursuit guidelines over the past five years, police are unable to continue **pursuits for property crimes** such as theft of a vehicle or theft from a vehicle. The risk of injury to an innocent bystander, suspect, and/or officer is too high of a likelihood of injury and pursuits statewide are closely regulated. There is no single solution to reducing property crime, however, the pursuit policy is widely known by both the public and offenders throughout the state.

## VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS

An analysis over the last several years was completed by our Crimes Analysis Office.

There were **28 incidents** in 2022/2023 where a person was the targeted victim. This number represents a 56% increase from the 2021/2022 fiscal year. 57% of the incidents involved a weapon.

Over the past 10 years, violent crime has doubled from 14 in 2012, to 28 in 2022.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Branford Police Department Office of Crimes Analysis, Annual Report, July 2021-June 2022

## VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS CONTINUED

	2021/2022 Incidents Rpt	2022/2023 Incidents Rpt	% Chg From Prior Year
<b>Violent Crimes</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56%</b>
Aggravated Assault	4	8	100%
Forcible Rape	3	10	233%
Forcible Sodomy	1	2	100%
Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter	1	0	-100%
Negligent Manslaughter	1	0	-100%
Robbery	7	8	14%
Sexual Assault with an Object	1	0	-100%

## RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPANSION

The Town of Branford provides tremendous economic development opportunities and a residential quality of life that will undoubtedly continue to attract future expansion. Smart economic development is justifiably considered an asset for municipalities. However, it is an accepted law enforcement principle that an increase in population and/or service area will increase the demand for police services. It is anticipated the Town of Branford will continue to grow both residentially and commercially.

The growth of public safety should mirror that of residential and commercial development.

## CONCLUSION

It is our duty to continuously monitor and evaluate our services to the Branford community. As mentioned in this document, Branford Police is currently operating at about 86% staffing. Since staffing is never at 100%, adding more officers to provide a higher level of service to our community is vital. Branford Police Department has continued to fulfill the requirements and responsibilities set forth by the State of Connecticut legislative changes and Police Officer Standard and Training Council mandates.

This Analysis and Overview of the Growing Demands on Police Services is intended to provide detail to assist in the decision-making process for additional police personnel. The current advantageous state of the Branford Police Department reflects its leadership, dedicated staff, and community support. This progressive planning will enable the Branford Police Department to meet the future needs of the community which we serve.

# APPENDIX A

Table of Organization, Branford Police Department, 2023

