

# MUSCATINE POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**A Nationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency  
Protecting and Serving Since 1851**

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## ***Muscatine Police Department***

### ***LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL***

TO: Muscatine Mayor and Council

THROUGH: Carol Webb, City Administrator

DATE: January 26, 2023

FROM: Brett Talkington, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Police Department Operational Report, 2022

The Muscatine Police Department submits an annual Operational Report to the Mayor and City Council as part of the requirements of our national accreditation. The purpose of this report is to provide an update of police department activities and to identify the major issues facing the department at this time. In addition, this information will hopefully provide some insight into the future trends or emerging issues which may impact the delivery of police services in some way.

The year 2022 has been significantly more positive than 2021 with the efforts that our community and officers have taken to keep our relationship in great standings. As I mentioned last year it felt as if law enforcement had taken a step back in time due to the pandemic. I truly believe that we are doing the right things and look for more improvement in the upcoming year.

One of the major issues that our department dealt with in 2022 is still our retention and recruitment. We have had (4) officers in 2022. Two (2) were terminated and two (2) retired from the department. With the upcoming retirement of the Police Chief in early 2023, and another officer resigning in early January we are looking for more personnel to fill these positions.

Finding good candidates for law enforcement jobs has been challenging. This will be an area we need to focus on in the future. This issue is not unlike any other law

enforcement agency throughout the country. All departments are having a hard time recruiting and retaining new officers. We will continue to work with Human Resources to come up with different ways to recruit new members.

I continue to challenge our supervisors and officers to come up with ways to implement problem oriented and community policing strategies. We provide them time to invent ways to bring the community together through whatever means they see fit. They have come up with some ideas, such as Code Blue that have been very successful in the community.

There has been a selection process for Police Chief and the department was very fortunate that it was an internal applicant. This shows the dedication that our city puts forth to continue our education and training to move our supervisors up the chain and achieving their goals. This will create a trickledown effect and there will be promotional processes and promotions that will take place in early 2023. We will be looking at promotion of Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant and possible Corporal promotions or other assignments within our organization.

The Patrol Division is the backbone of the department. The officers try to remain proactive within the community. Our officers are dedicated to the improvement of our community, while placing their lives on the line every day. The citizens of Muscatine should be very proud of the job the officers do on a daily basis.

We as a community need to do our part. We have had many positive interactions in our community over the course of 2022. We would like to think we have made some positive strides within the community with positive interactions with our citizens. We will continue to build these relationships within our community.

I hope that this annual report is useful and helpful when considering the state of the city as it pertains to your police department. The statistics we provide are meant to give a numerical overview of what's happening in our city.

Credit for the preparation, development and gathering of the information contained herein, goes to many people. It is the combined effort of administrative, supervision, line-officers and clerical personnel. It is our hope that this information is as useful to others as it is to us as we look at the issues currently facing the department and our community as a whole.

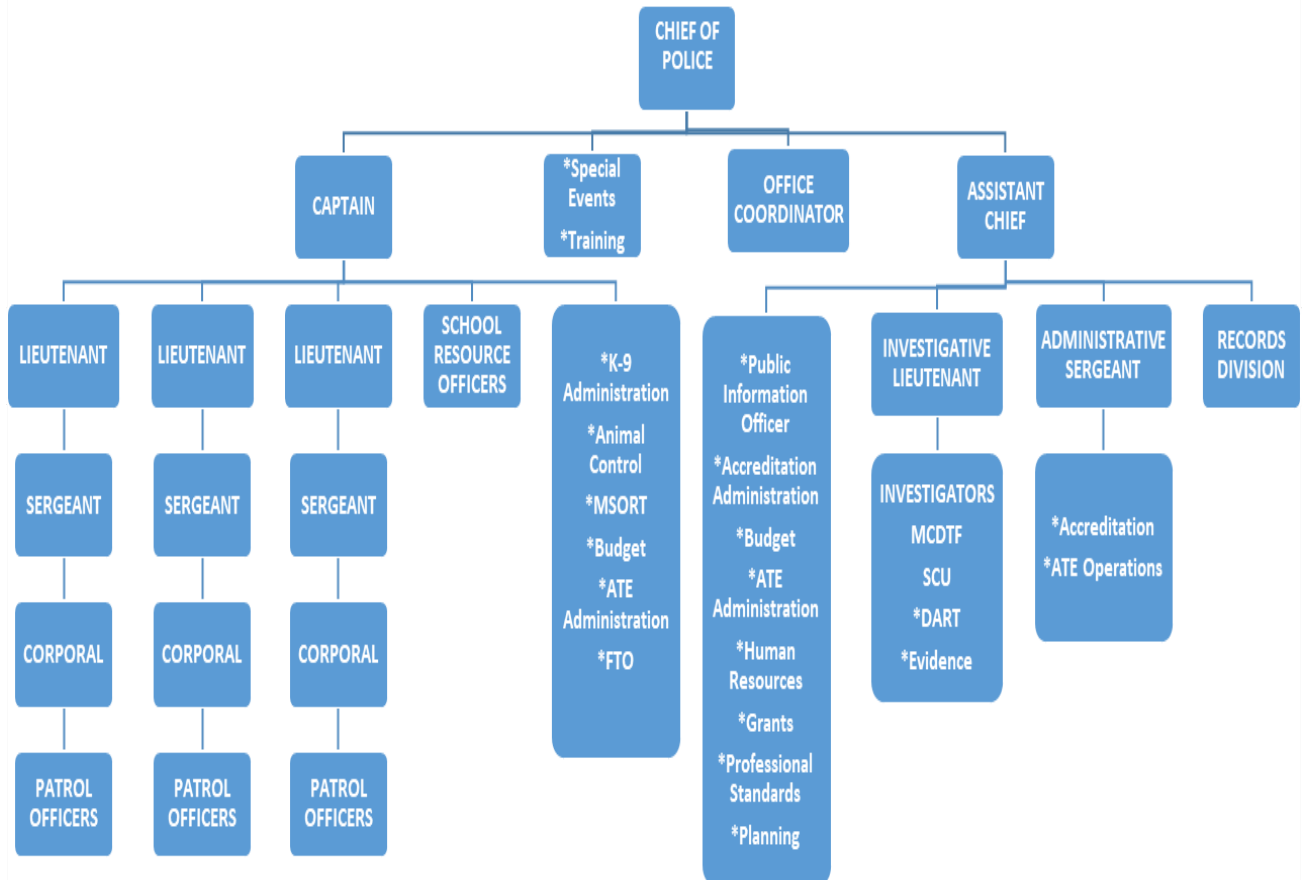


With that, I would like to thank you for supporting our department throughout the year. As always, I hope you will find our summary of 2022 interesting and informative. I have enjoyed my 34+ years of service and look forward to leaving you in great hands with the new Police Chief. He will continue to move the Police Department in the right direction.

Chief Brett Talkington  
Muscatine Police Department



# Muscatine Police Department Organizational Structure



Total # of Sworn Officers: 41  
 Total # of Officers for Patrol: 27  
 # of Investigators: 7  
 # of Off Site Officers: 4  
 # of Administrators: 3

Every organization needs/has structure. Perhaps the best definition of a police organization is that it is a system of consciously coordinated activities, with a common goal, divisions of labor, coordination of effort, and most especially in our domain, a hierarchy of authority. No other department of city government has more of a need for such a hierarchy, than the police. Million dollar jury awards are routinely leveled against cities all over the nation, for things that police do and shouldn't have, or do not do, and should have.

The structure of this organization plays a very important role. Not just in authority and responsibility, but in active "risk management." To the casual observer, an organizational chart may look like a genealogical attempt gone wrong. In the law enforcement environment, it helps to explain how the organization functions. An organizational chart reveals four basic dimensions of the organization's structure:

1. Hierarchy of Authority (who reports to whom).
2. Division of labors (what group performs what function).
3. Span of control (how many people are supervised).
4. Line and Staff position (who is doing what).

The theory behind the dimensions of this organizational structure demonstrates the basic tenants of our operational theory, as illustrated below:

1. Division of Labor (people become proficient when they perform standardized tasks over and over again).
2. Hierarchy of Authority (a formal chain of command ensures coordination, accountability and responsibility).
3. Rules and regulations (carefully formulated and strictly enforced rules assure some behavior, and prohibit other behaviors).
4. Administrative Impersonality (personnel decisions such as hiring, promotional eligibility, and firing are undertaken in-part by an authority (Civil Service Commission) other than the organization's chief executive officer).

The Muscatine Police Department has historically followed a traditional organizational model, much like most other law enforcement agencies. For the most part, law enforcement has embraced such an organizational structure because law enforcement has traditionally functioned best through a coordination of effort, much like the military. Coordination of effort is achieved through formulation and enforcement of policies, rules, and regulations. Our chain of command is nothing more than a control mechanism dedicated to making sure the right people do the right things at the right time.

## **Patrol Division**

Patrol division operated with three shifts in 2022. Afternoon & night (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>) shifts were assigned a 10-hour shift schedule, (4 days on – 3 days off), while day shift remained on an 8-hour shift schedule, (5 days on – 2 days off). By keeping day shift on an 8-hour schedule this allowed the patrol division to function while sustaining the Street Crimes Unit Division. The extra manpower created during this overlap on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shift was used to supplement several objectives, such as special patrols, community policing projects, increased bike patrols, and department training. The patrol division faced several challenges throughout 2022. Due to personnel shortages, Detectives / Street Crimes Unit personnel had to be pulled from their assignments to help maintain adequate coverage within the patrol division.

The patrol division continues to make very positive changes in 2022. Project ABLE is a concept designed to prevent public harm through developing a department wide commitment to the ideals of peer intervention. ABLE establishes annual training protocols as well as policy revisions that support and protect officers who do intervene. Since officers have trained to the Project ABLE standards MPD has seen a decrease in over 50% less personnel complaints from the previous year (2021). MPD did not realize a personnel complaint in 2022. All use of force reports are reviewed prior to approval and there was a major impact on peer intervention and clear communication between officers. It is truly a department wide commitment to active bystandership.

In 2022, several of the Department personnel attended City sponsored leadership training. The training emphasized core City values and participants were asked to commit to a communication contract. It is a goal of the MPD to implement the aforementioned values and contract with all department personnel.

The department continues to support the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) group. The group's purpose, in its simplest form, is to create community discussion and awareness about equitable representation and opportunities within Muscatine and to help ensure all segments of the Muscatine community feel included and supported. The department saw the need to be a part of these very important discussions and has been participating with the DEI group since it was formed. There are now three members from patrol who are participating with various segments of the DEI group.



## **Projects and Programs**

Several community projects and programs were developed and/or have been supported within the patrol division throughout 2022. The POPCAN project has evolved, and is currently being implemented into Iowa Crime Free Multi-Housing Program. The purpose of this initiative is to establish a relationship with complex and rental property ownership as well as tenants in order to reduce criminal activity. In addition, it is the intent of this program to create an overall safer environment in places where a higher volume of department calls for service/serious incidents have traditionally transpired based on collected data.

Through association with the Muscatine DEI group, patrol division members continue to connect with the African American Church at Calvary. Patrol members have been attending services and developing stronger relationships with the congregation. Many of these refugees have arrived with unfavorable views of law enforcement based upon experiences in their home countries. Language barriers can further compound this issue. Patrol members have provided educational discussions related to police operations in Muscatine and what can be expected when interacting with officers.

Code Blue was a project initiated and implemented in 2021. Code Blue was designed and proposed by a patrol member in an effort to recognize families within the community who suffer the sudden and unexpected loss of a family member due to suicide, car accident, violent crime or any other reasons that department members would find appropriate.

The Code Blue coordinator begins the process with the collection of donations from department members. The proceeds support the cost of meals for the bereaved family, while extending the agency's emotional support. This year (2022) Code Blue was able to assist 6 families in need. We have been contacted by other larger agencies in Iowa who are wanting to meet and learn how to begin their own Code Blue response.

"A Book and a Badge" was again completed this year with our patrol officers. A book and a badge series was a partnership between the Musser public Library and the Muscatine Police Department. The series highlighted different areas of the police department and allowed children access to our day to day activities. Each episode talked about a different aspect of a police officer's job and allowed different

officers to read a police book during the episode. Our objective for the series was for children to see different assignments within our police department and to give them a fun look at our jobs.

### **Police Chaplin Corps**

The Police Chaplin Corps has been active within the department since 2013. It has continued to grow and become a more intricate part of the police department. Headed by Pastor Alex Kindred, the Corps constantly is looking for ways to improve upon their training and expand their roles within the department. Additional members of the Corps are Pastor Don Timmermann, Pastor Dianna Russell and Pastor Brian Oliver.

The Chaplin Corps fulfills a dual role, that of community involvement and counselor. Chaplin's interact with personnel during traumatic events such as, serious or fatality accidents, suicides, homicides, or death notifications. They also support Department staff through counseling and have helped officers through critical incidents. Chaplin Corps members make an effort to embed themselves within the Department's patrol shifts and establish relationships with officers. It is the intent of the Department and the Corps to provide an alternative outlet for officer wellness and informal counseling.

The Chaplin Corps also involves themselves in other MPD activities such as the Shop with a Cop program, the Holiday Stroll, Coffee with a Cop and the Department's Police Memorial service. The department sponsors training opportunities from time to time for members of the chaplain corps.

### **Specialty Assignments**

The Patrol Division supports several specialty assignments. These assignments include School Resource Officers (SRO), the K-9 Unit, Bike Patrol Unit, Muscatine Evidence Technician (M.E.T.) program and the Muscatine Special Response Team (MSORT) to name a few.

### **S.R.O.**

Current School Resource Officer's (SRO) include Officer Whitney Peña and Officer Angela Shoultz. Officer Peña works primarily at Susan Clark Junior High School, while Officer Shoultz works with the Muscatine High School. During the summer

break months both officers are reassigned to patrol division. The SRO positions are rotated every 3 to 4 years.

SRO's spend a great deal of time addressing student truancy and conducting home visits. Both SRO Pena and Shoultz were recognized by MHS administration for their superior efforts toward curbing truancy. Their collaborative efforts almost cut chronic absenteeism in half (1790 cases in winter 2021-2022 to 882 case compared to winter 2022-2023). It should be noted the current level of truancy is at an all-time low dating back to 2015.

Officer Peña & Officer Shoultz are both part of the Muscatine County Impact of Substance Use task force. As part of this task, both officers focus their efforts on educating students about the perils of substance abuse. They also educate parents on how to recognize substance use indicators within their teens. This past year Officer Peña and Officer Shoultz were able to utilize the "Drug Trailer" in 5 events. As a result, approximately 150 citizens were educated on what to look for in their children's room when it comes to drug usage.

As a result of the Iowa Governor signing the "school safety initiative", this year both Officer Peña & Officer Shoultz visited every MHS building and meet with staff to discuss safety issues surrounding individual buildings. SRO's offered insight on how to make school buildings more secure while maintaining an environment to learn in. Additional activities credited to the efforts of the SRO's include, educating approximately 800 Muscatine School employees on active shooter response "ALICE" training and assisting Muscatine Community School District in the implementation of "My Life, My Quit" program which addresses possession of vape products while under age. In 2022, fifteen (15) middle school and twenty-five (25) high school students were found in violation of the current MHS vaping policy.

Both Officer Pena and Shoultz are active members in the prevent violence coalition. Within the 2022 calendar year, both SRO officers were involved in four acts of random kindness reaching approximately four-thousand (4,000) kids per event in the Muscatine, West Liberty and Wilton School Districts.



## **K-9**

The Muscatine K-9 Unit operated with two dog & handler (K-9) teams for the majority of 2022. Officer Griffin and Officer Wilkinson make up the two officer team. Both dogs are trained as dual purpose (narcotic & street patrol) dogs.

Having two teams assigned to the Muscatine K-9 Unit, allows the department to provide K-9 coverage over a broad range of hours, as the K-9 teams are currently assigned to second and third shifts. Dual purpose K-9s have the following capabilities: Narcotic Detection, tracking, apprehension, article searches, and crowd control. Members of the K-9 Unit work closely with the department's Street Crimes Unit as well as outside agencies such as the Muscatine County Drug Task Force and the Iowa State Patrol.

Training is a critical component for effective K-9 employment. The department's K-9 teams have been attending 8 hours of monthly training, where they collaborate with other K-9 teams from the QC area. Training with a group allows them to network and gain insight from other toward their training styles and tactics. In addition to monthly training, the K-9 teams will train while on duty as time allows. This ensures that the teams are training in realistic situations and allows them to demonstrate proficiency while at work.

In 2022, the K-9 unit assisted with 30 arrests and recovered approximately 184 grams of marijuana, 141 grams of Methamphetamine, 50 grams of Heroin, various prescription pills and numerous pieces of drug paraphernalia. Both K-9 teams had a combined total of three (3) no bite apprehension and one (1) apprehension resulting in a bite. The K-9 teams are expecting calls for service to increase in 2023 as their experience as handlers and comfortability with their partners grow.



### **Bike Patrol**

The MPD bike patrol participated in several events in 2022. Most notable was the participation in the 2022 Muscatine Special Olympics event. Bike patrol members are assigned to patrol the city's bike paths and problem areas, during the shift overlaps. Bike patrol members concentrate their efforts toward special events, such as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, Muscatine Riverfront activities and targeted patrol projects within the City.

### **A.C.O.**

2022 was the first full year of employment for ACO Courtney Patel. To say the least, ACO Patel was very proactive in the aforementioned calendar year. In 2022, ACO's responded to approximately 972 calls for service, which resulted in 171 violations being issued. The City of Fruitland accounted for an additional 10 calls for service



and Muscatine County requested the ACO for one 1 call for service. It should be noted, ACO Patel was involved in one animal neglect case which netted 93 criminal charges being filed in District Court.

In 2022, there were 189 cats and 76 dogs transported to the humane society. Compared to previous years, animal carcasses doubled from the previous year resulting in 80 animal carcasses retrieved. A total of 453 transports were completed in 2022 which was an increase of 120 from the previous year.

ACO Patel uses Facebook as a way to reach out and connect with the public. She uses social media as a conduit to post pictures of stray animals and has enjoyed some great success stories in reuniting pets with their owners. She also has people who contact her via Facebook asking questions and seeking advice.

ACO Patel will continue to strive for an increase in the number of city pet licenses being issued and focusing on pet ownership responsibility. The ACO strives to have a positive working relationship with the Muscatine Humane Society, local vet clinics, outside animal agencies, and other city employees. Animal and community safety continues to be the top priorities for the ACO.

## **Muscatine Police Department Division of Investigations Operations 2022**

### **General Information**

The Department's Criminal Investigations Division is comprised of three different groups each focusing on specific disciplines. The Major Crimes Unit (MCU) is made up of three general crimes detectives, the Street Crimes Unit (SCU) consists of two officers, and the Muscatine County Drug Task Force (DTF) includes two assigned officers to the joint task force. The Assistant Chief serves as the division commander, while the Investigative Lieutenant is responsible for the direct supervision and daily operations of each Unit. The Investigative Lieutenant is also charged with managing department held evidence.

### **Muscatine Evidence Technician program**

The Muscatine Evidence Technician (MET) program is comprised of a small group of officers who receive specialized training in photography, as well as the collection and processing of evidence. The MET unit operates on an on-call basis throughout the year and are relied upon to process all major crime scenes.

In 2022, Evidence technicians were used to process (31) different cases. These cases included burglaries, stolen vehicles, stabbings, shootings, and many others. Officers spent approximately 5 hours on scenes and 59 hours processing evidence. MET spent approximately 134 hours related to scene documentation, evidence collection, and evidence processing. MET officers undergo continuous training to keep their skills sharp and updated. The MET is currently operating with five (5) team members.

MET members Corporal Horton and Officer Cabrera assisted with the 2022 Junior Police Academy. Their presentation included crime scene processing and evidence gathering. Twenty JPA cadets had a blast as they processed a mock crime scene and collected their own evidence.

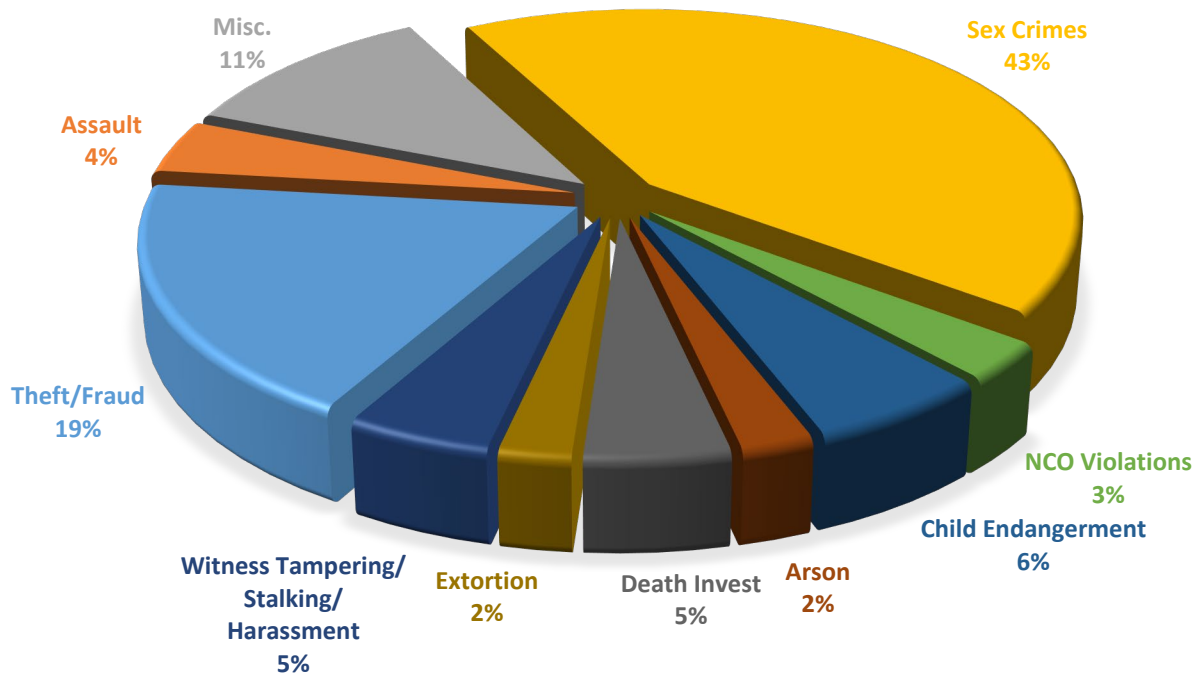


### **Major Crimes Unit (MCU)**

The MCU is primarily responsible for the investigation of the most serious crimes occurring within the community. Sex Abuse, Theft/Fraud, and violent crimes make up the majority of the cases assigned to the MCU. In 2022, the MCU was assigned 168 investigations. The MCU totaled 67 arrests or requests for arrest warrants in 2022 and served approximately 59 search warrants. The MCU had an 83% case clearance rate. Sex related crimes such as, Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Assault, Lascivious Acts, Indecent Exposure, and Enticing a Minor, comprised the highest percent of cases (43%) investigated in 2022.

Collecting, interpreting, and managing electronic data, as it relates to criminal investigations, is a central focus for the MCU. The examination of cell phones, tablets, computers, and social media accounts is a task that has expanded exponentially over the last few years. The MCU is equipped with a device that allows them to examine most mobile devices, such as cell phones and tablets. This examination also includes analysis of the data. In 2022, approximately sixty (60) electronic devices were examined, and analyzed by the MCU.

## MAJOR CRIMES UNIT 2022

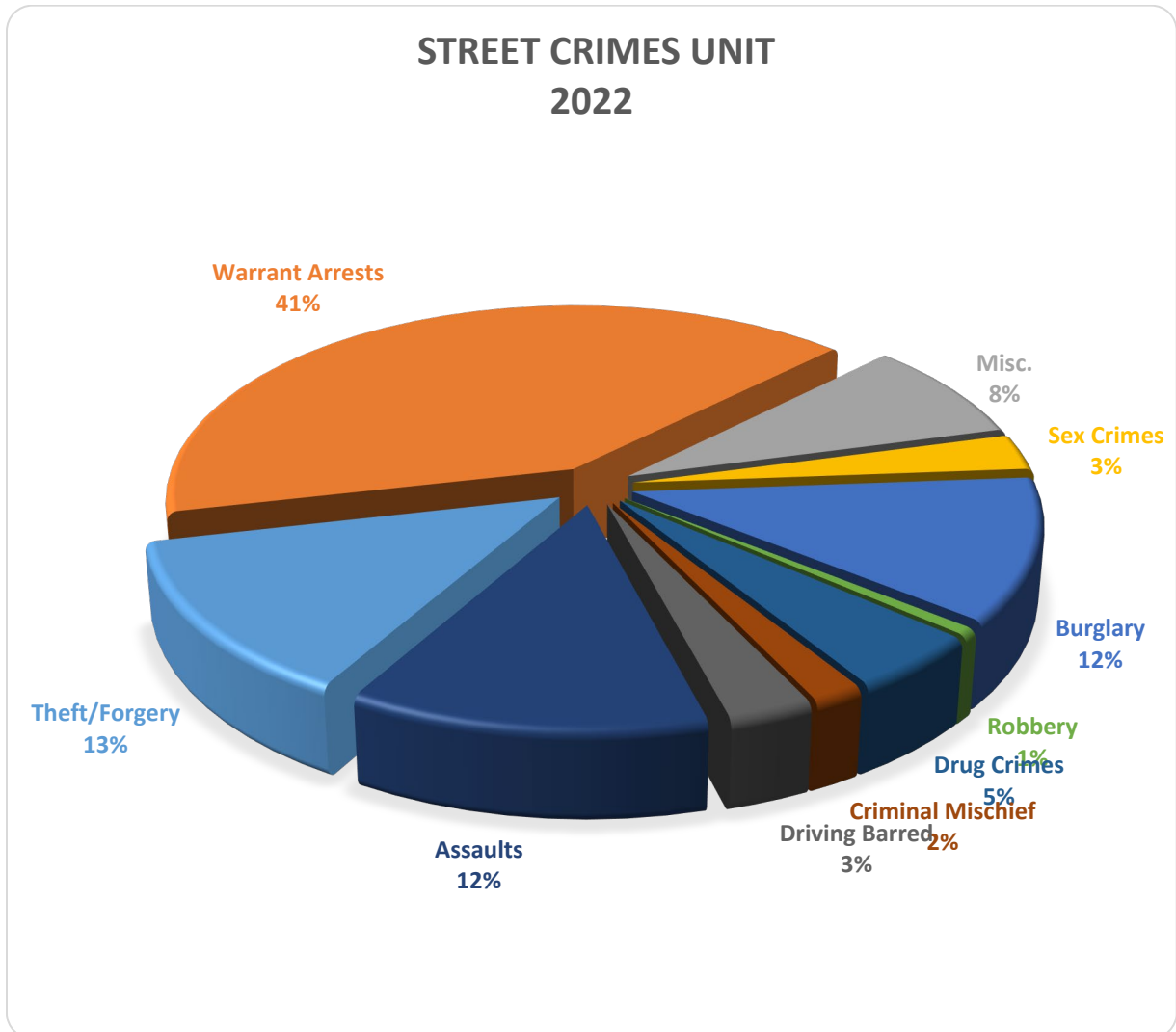


## Street Crimes Unit (SCU)

The SCU has two officers designated to this assignment as investigators. They work primarily as a two-person team on a daily basis and are assigned cases that originate in the patrol division. The unit is focused on criminal gang behavior in the community, including gathering and managing intelligence of known gang affiliates and their associates. A lot of their investigations are concentrated on criminal behavior involving weapons, drugs, and violence against persons. The SCU is assigned an unmarked patrol car which makes it easier for them to conduct surveillance operations and locate wanted persons.

The SCU was fully operational during 2022 and their cases and arrests were the highest SCU has produced in many years. The SCU was assigned or self-generated

168 cases, made 125 arrests, and had 25 arrest warrant requests. The SCU had an 88% case clearance rate.



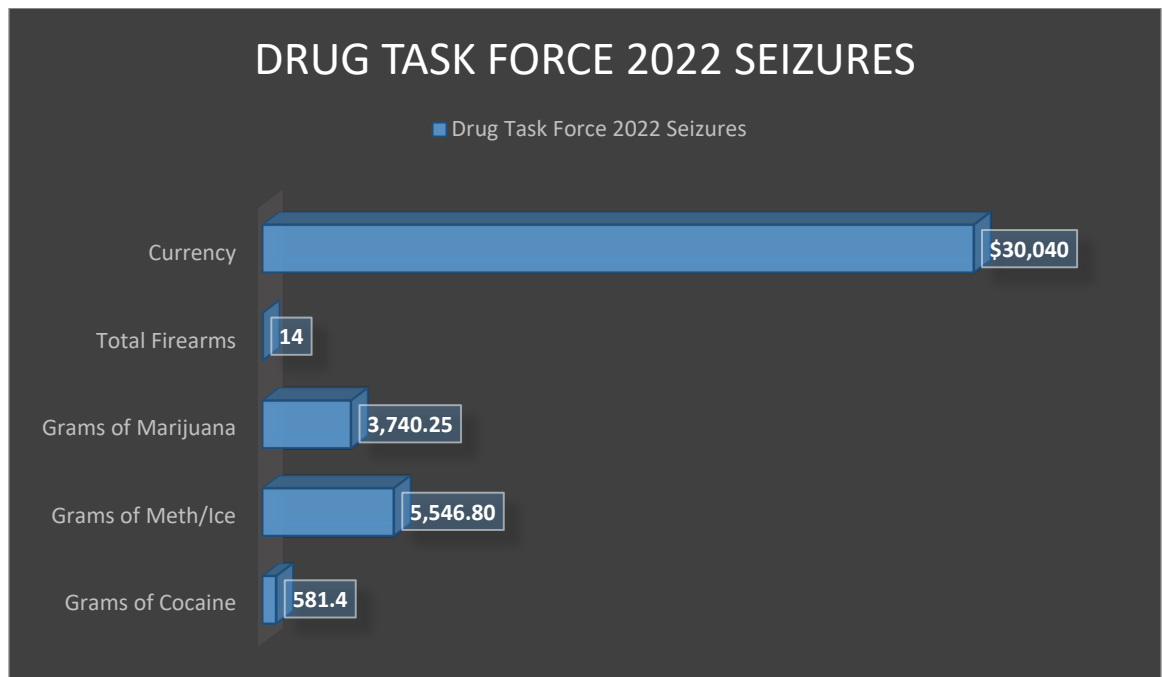
### **Muscatine County Drug Task Force (DTF)**

The Muscatine County DTF functions as a joint multi-jurisdictional task force that covers Muscatine County, Cedar County, and Louisa County. The MCDTF will be called upon to assist outside agencies, including Burlington, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Johnson County, and agencies in the Quad Cities area. The MCDTF also works closely with agencies from the Federal Government and participates



regularly in federally indictable offenses. The Muscatine Police Department assigns two full time investigators to serve as part of this task force.

In 2022, the MCDTF participated in a total of 233 different operations. This resulted in (48) felony drug arrests and (28) search warrants executions.



## **PROBLEM ORIENTED (POP) AND COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING (COP)**

Problem Oriented Policing is defined as *“policing strategies that involve the identification and analysis of specific crime and disorder problems, in order to develop effective response strategies utilizing community interaction wherever possible.”* POP as well as Community Policing projects have become a cornerstone of proactive law enforcement efforts in Muscatine since the early 1990’s. Since that time, the Muscatine Police Department has operated or been involved in numerous POP/COP projects and programs allowing for greater communication and interaction between citizens and law enforcement.

### **Junior Police Academy**

In June of 2022, the Muscatine Police Department, in cooperation with Muscatine Community College and the Muscatine High School, held the 2<sup>st</sup> Annual Junior Police Academy. The goal of this program is to foster a strong relationship with local and regional high school students, who may be interested in a law enforcement career. The hope is to mentor young people living in the Muscatine area toward remaining in the area and potentially seek employment with the Muscatine Police Department.

Junior Police Academy participants are exposed to real time, hands on training involving patrol tactics, evidence collection, K-9 operations and report writing to name a few topics. Select graduate(s) of the Academy are eligible for **two** separate academic scholarships, one provided by the Muscatine Community College while the second awarded given by the Muscatine Police Officer’s Association. The Department’s 2022 Junior Police Academy graduated twenty-five (25) students in 2022.



### **Muscatine Center for Social Action**

In 2022 the Muscatine Police Department continued its' close cooperation with the Muscatine Center for Social Action (MCSA). Since 2006 a member of the police department has sat on the Executive Board for MCSA. The ability of the MPD member to participate in the operational and logistical decision making process has helped to create a common goal mentality between the MCSA and the MPD. This has helped foster a greater understanding by each entity of what the others goals are and how we can best work together to achieve those goals.

The MCSA has established a Mental Health Peer Drop-In Center which is an extension of the disability services program. This program has been a great tool when officers come into contact with those suffering from mental health or other related issues that are not typically law enforcement specific.

The Muscatine Police Department works jointly with Eastern Iowa Mental Health and Disability Services Region. The Region has established a crisis hotline that currently services Jackson, Clinton, Cedar, Scott, and Muscatine County. In times of need, Officers distribute a crisis line phone number or directly call the crisis line while interacting with an individual or family in crisis. If needed, a crisis staff member will respond to the scene to render assistance.

## **Park & Walk**

The Muscatine Police Department continued its “Park & Walk” program during 2022. This project is designed to allow officers an opportunity to get out of their squad car (foot patrol) and interact with the community on a non-enforcement related basis. Officers are encouraged to spend 30 minutes each shift somewhere in their assigned beat area, visiting places like schools, downtown business district, parks, and housing complexes. Though the primary goal of this project is to create opportunities for personal interaction between officers and the community, it has the added benefit of becoming a deterrent for criminal activity as well. In 2022, approximately 1550 individual foot patrol (Park & Walks) were conducted by MPD personnel.

## **Operation Clean Sweep**

In 2022 “Operation Clean Sweep” continued to be active. Operation Clean Sweep is designed to enforce the graffiti ordinance by gaining the cooperation of property owners to quickly remove graffiti. It also requires businesses to restrict purchase of spray paint by offenders. Ongoing studies have shown when graffiti is removed with 24-48 hours there is a nearly zero reoccurrence rate. As part of the program, suggestions are made to the property owner on how to avoid similar occurrences. Some of these suggestions are;

1. Report graffiti to the police department immediately
2. Restrict access to prone areas by planting trees and shrubbery
3. The installation of lighting in dark, targeted areas
4. The use of graffiti resistant surfaces when possible.

## **Coffee with a Cop**

The “Coffee with a Cop” project was very active during 2022. Coffee with a Cop allows officers and citizens an opportunity to converse and interact outside of their normal roles. During the 2022 year there were 11 events hosted by the local businesses where people had a chance to voice concerns, ask question or just get to know the officers.



## **Other Events & Opportunities**

In 2022 the department utilized its' social media presence to recruit new hire applicants, seek community help toward solving active criminal cases and promote the Department as a whole. The MPD Facebook page netted approximately 111,198 pages reached in 2022. On 32,814 separate times, persons visited the Muscatine Police Department Facebook page resulting in 909 "likes". Most notable was a social media post highlighting the positive efforts conducted by the Muscatine Police Department / Muscatine Fire Department. The posting reached 42,685 viewers, "liked" 2934 times and was "shared" 185 times.

Positive exposure on social media remains very cost effective. As our citizens continue to rely on social media for information, maintaining a very proactive approach on this platform is essential. By maintaining this presence, this will provide increased opportunities to reach and inform a large number of civilians while keeping overhead costs of advertisement low.

## **Muscatine Police Officers Association**

Though not under the direct purview of the department, the community policing efforts of the Muscatine Police Officers Association has added greatly to the cause. The Muscatine Police Officers Association (MPOA) is a local affiliate of the Iowa State Police Association. The MPOA was founded in 1934 and is one of the oldest such association in Iowa. The MPOA is a fraternal/charitable organization within the Muscatine Police Department and membership is open to all sworn personnel.



The MPOA engages in a variety of fundraising events during the year which bring great positive attention to the department and to the goals of the MPOA.

The charitable efforts of the MPOA deal mainly with the youth of Muscatine and the surrounding area. Through programs like “Shop with a Cop” the MPOA seeks to foster good relations with those that will one day become citizens of our community and to improve the department’s image within the community.

The MPOA sponsors both boys and girls sports activities through Muscatine Parks & Rec, the Youth Sports Foundation and other such organizations. The MPOA is also the primary contributor to the Police Explorer program and the Junior Police Academy. However the MPOA’s oldest and most recognized activity is the “Shop with a Cop” program which began in 1991.

“Shop with a Cop” works like this. Selected kids are taken through Walmart and were allowed to spend \$150 on themselves and family members. In 2022, approximately 100 kids participated in the “Shop with a Cop” program. This effort could not be realized without many area individuals and businesses donating to the program.



## **Law Enforcement Accreditation**

Law Enforcement Accreditation began with the creation of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) in 1979. The Commission was created through the joint efforts of the major law enforcement executive associations:

- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
- Police Executive Research Forum
- National Sheriff's Association

The purpose of CALEA's accreditation program is to improve the delivery of public safety services. Their stated goals are:

- Strengthen crime prevention and control capabilities
- Formalize essential management procedures
- Establish fair and non-discriminating personnel practices
- Improve service delivery
- Solidify interagency cooperation and coordination
- Increase community and staff confidence in the agency

The Muscatine Police Department received its initial accreditation award in December of 2000. Since that time we have been awarded reaccredited status in 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015, and 2019. The department's next accreditation award is slated for 2023. The Muscatine Police Department is the longest standing accredited agency in the State of Iowa.

Being an accredited agency puts the police department in much better position to defend against any lawsuits which may arise. The department is able to show that it is complying with national standards of operation and not merely standards developed by the police department. Accreditation aids in creating better trained and professional personnel, as it requires the department to stay current on national trends and recent case law pertaining to law enforcement practices.

# **AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

## **Background**

The City of Muscatine has operated an Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) program since 2010. Gatso USA has been our supplier of ATE equipment since its installation. The ATE equipment is designed to monitor both red light and speed violations at five (5) intersections. The intersections where ATE equipment is installed are:

Washington St at Park Ave (north and south approaches)  
Cleveland St at Park Ave (north and south approaches)  
Cedar St at Houser St (east and west approaches)  
University Dr at US Hwy 61 (westbound approach)  
Mulberry Ave at US Hwy 61 (westbound approach)

Each intersection has signage which clearly advises drivers that photo enforcement equipment is in as the driver approaches those intersections. In addition to those signs, the City has in place “traffic laws photo enforced” signs on every corporate limit signs posts on roadways entering Muscatine.

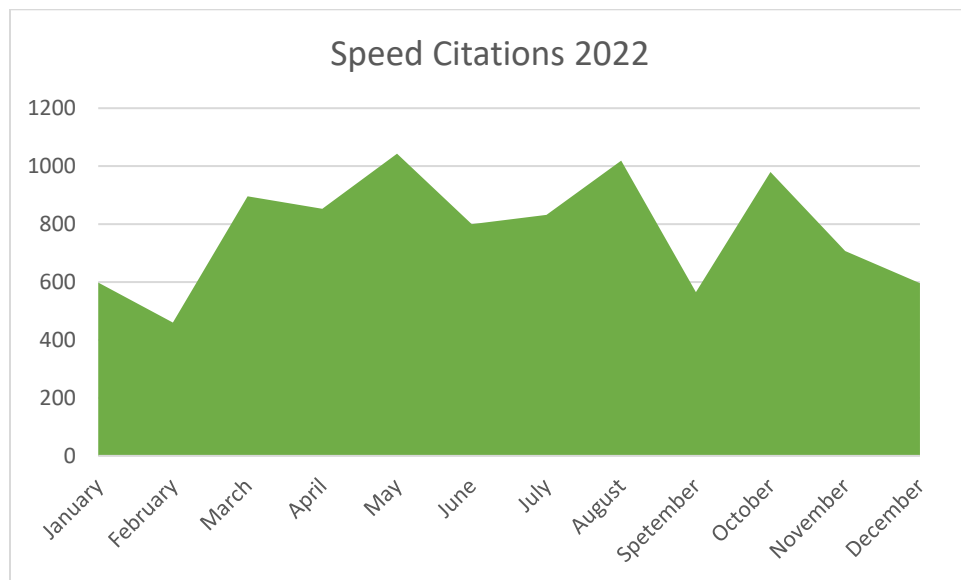
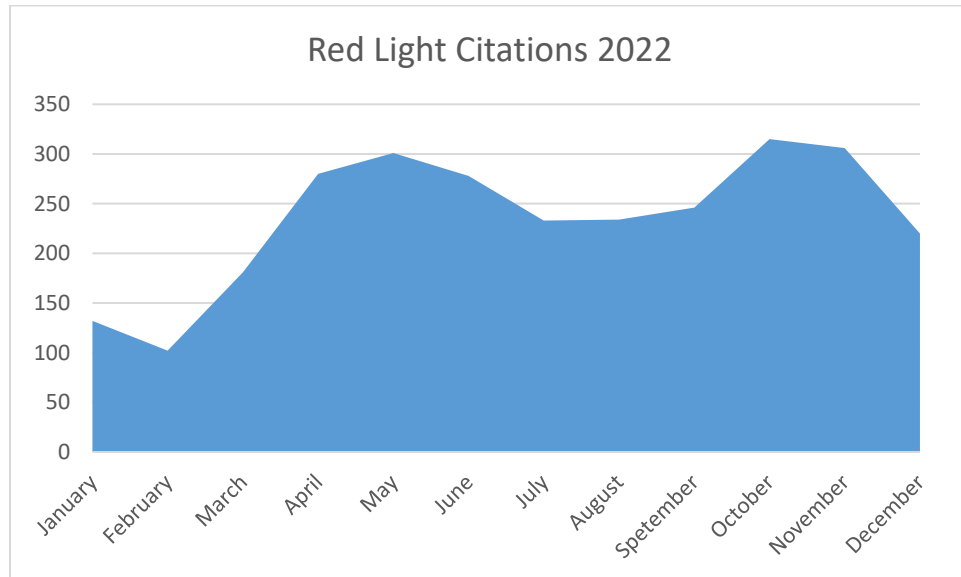
Every violation that is captured by Gatso USA is sent to the department for review. A police officer who has been trained on the system reviews the data and determines if a violation of the city ordinance has occurred. If a violation has occurred then the officer will issue a citation.

Having an ATE program provides a number of benefits to the community:

- \* The use of such equipment frees up the officers’ time and allows them to focus on other aspects of policing, such as community policing and problem oriented policing programs.
- \* It helps improve driver safety at these troubled intersections by altering driver behavior and reducing accidents.
- \* The ATE equipment has been used to help solve crime by aiding in the identification of suspect vehicles leaving crime scenes.
- \* When accidents do occur within these intersections, the officer can review ATE video to determine exactly what happened.
- \* The system can be set for license plate recognition in cases of Amber Alerts or stolen vehicles

## Current Statistics and Events

During 2022 there were a total of 12,177 citations issued. 2,828 citations were issued for red light violations and 9,359 citations were issued for speed violations. Of the speed violations, 2,154 were generated from the mobile speed vehicle, (Chevy Sonic), which was in operation the complete calendar year.



## **Field Training Program**

The Muscatine Police Department's Field Training Program is an intensive, hands-on training program that all new recruits are required to complete upon graduation from the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. It is structured and organized training which is broken down into four steps or phases. Each step is comprised of a set number of training task lists, which the probationary officer, under the guidance of his/her Field Training Officer (FTO), must master and sign off on. As the probationary officer progresses through each of the steps, he/she is expected to take on more of the work load and demonstrate a continual growth in overall self-proficiency. Upon successful completion of the fourth step, the probationary officer is allowed to begin solo patrol. Each step is approximately one month long but may take longer under extenuating circumstances. The officers that oversee all of this training are known as the field training cadre. The cadre is comprised of all active FTOs, the FTO coordinator and the FTO commander.

The FTO commander is the Patrol Captain Tony Kies. The FTO coordinator is Lieutenant Ryan Buss. The coordinator is responsible for creating and maintaining the training schedules and training tasks for the probationary officers. The coordinator will facilitate monthly cadre meetings whenever a probationary officer is in training. Should a probationary officer begin to show performance deficiencies during their FTO training, the coordinator will meet with both the probationary officer and his/her FTO and assist them in developing a plan of action that will help the probationary officer bring his/her performance back up to an acceptable level. The FTO coordinator reports to the FTO commander and keeps the commander apprised of probationary officer's progress.

The most crucial position in the field training cadre is that of the Field Training Officer (FTO). The FTO is responsible for conducting all training and completing daily evaluations of the probationary officer's performance. Beginning the first day a probationary officer arrives from the academy, he/she is assigned to an FTO and they become permanent partners throughout the first step of training. This FTO is known as their primary FTO. The probationary will then rotate to two more different FTOs for steps two and three before rotating back to his/her primary FTO for step four of their training. The primary FTO is then able to see how far the probationary officer has advanced in his/her training. The primary FTO will be the one who recommends the probationary officer advance to solo patrol.

Becoming an FTO (Field Training Officer) is completely voluntary and officers wishing to become an FTO must go through an application process. Once their



application is received it is reviewed by the entire FTO cadre. The officers applying must have a solid work record free of any disciplinary issues. They must be self-motivated and able to work well in a team environment. Only officers that have demonstrated an above average work performance are considered for appointment as an FTO. Once the field training cadre votes on which candidates to recommend, those candidates are then reviewed by the FTO coordinator and the FTO commander before final approval is given. Once an officer is selected to become an FTO, he/she is sent to a 40 hour course, which teaches them how to train, evaluate and document the probationary officer's performance.

The officers selected to become FTOs are some of the best the department has to offer. The majority of FTOs see advancement into special assignments or through promotion. The months that FTOs are assigned to train are very time consuming for them and they generally have little time for anything else. They do this willingly, without complaint and minimal compensation for taking on the extra duty, because each FTO understands the importance of turning out a competent and self-sufficient officer at the end of the training process.

Implementation of software designed to assist the FTO's with training began in 2013. This involved some customization and inputting of the training tasks that we had already developed as part of the existing program. What this has done for us is it has streamlined the training process. We no longer keep daily training logs on paper. The program is a paperless system that is maintained online. The new officer's progress in the program can be reviewed by the FTO, Shift Supervisors and Command Staff at any time, by accessing the program by using a desk top computer or any Mobile Data computer in a squad car.

The two officers hired at the end of 2021 successfully completed the FTO program and are active and thriving within the department. As well as two officers which we hired in mid-2022. These officers have completed their FTO program as well and are working 2<sup>nd</sup> shift. We have two new hires currently in ILEA and will hopefully be completed with the program by mid-2023.

The department continues its implementation of a mentoring program for all new recruits. The program works by pairing a seasoned officer (mentor) with a new recruit. The mentor then takes on the role of coaching the new officer as they transition into their new law enforcement career. The mentor will help the new recruit with everything from finding a place to live to learning and understanding

the department's philosophies and politics. The goal of the mentoring program is to increase the department's retention of new officers.

Becoming a mentor is also a voluntary assignment. The mentor fulfills a different role from that of the FTO, therefore they cannot be one in the same. Those officers who volunteer for the mentoring program are screened for their suitability for such an assignment prior to being appointed. We are hopeful that this program will become a successful component in our efforts to slow down the turnover rate within the department by helping our new recruits become better adjusted and more comfortable with making Muscatine their permanent home.

## **Muscatine Special Operations Response Team (MSORT)**

The Muscatine Special Operations Response Team (MSORT) is a specialized unit consisting of individuals who have received additional training in weapons handling and tactical incidents. The MSORT consists of long rifle marksmen (snipers), tactical operators, tactical emergency medical personnel, (TEMS) and negotiators. The number of members on MSORT fluctuates depending on manpower, school availability, and interest. Assignment to MSORT is completely voluntary and officers wishing to be considered for the team must go through an application process.

MSORT is a team that consists currently of 33 members, up from 31 in 2022. This number can vary due to personnel transfers. Of note, in early 2021 the Assistant Commander was elected Sheriff of Muscatine County, two members moved on to other employment and other positions were filled. Most recently a negotiator has been added, as well as an entry member and several potential entry members in the near future. We continue to reach out to other area agencies. The critical number that MSORT must sustain to meet NTOA standards as a qualified tier 2 team is 19 members excluding TEMS and Negotiations, and we are currently at 22 members in this area.

MSORT is currently under NTOA standards for training time, but strives to meet as many standards as possible. For the 2023 training year, MSORT will continue to meet 168 hours of training, having (9) 2-8hr training months and (3) 8 hr. training months. MSORT was able to send ten members, from various agencies, to

the week-long National Tactical Officer's Association (NTOA) conference in Milwaukee, WI in September. MSORT snipers conducted 96 hours of training and negotiators conducted 32 hours of training. The continued goal is to provide MSORT members with additional training hours, including outside instruction, which has been accomplished each year since MSORT's inception.

All MSORT members must satisfactorily complete a physical agility test and demonstrate a minimum 90% proficiency with their assigned weapons. Every tactical operator is put through a basic SWAT course prior to being activated as a member. This is usually a week long course and teaches the team member the basics of team movement, dynamic and deliberate entry techniques and breaching techniques. Long rifle marksmen are put through a sniper course, which covers stalking techniques and hones shooting skills. Team leaders receive training in tactical operations planning and execution. Hostage negotiators attend a forty-hour hostage negotiation school. The TEMS members are paramedics from the Muscatine Fire Department who also attend basic SWAT school and are qualified to carry a firearm. This allows for emergency medical care to be readily available to team members, crime scene victims and suspects.

The MSORT has continued in its effort to explore new tactics and stay current in the team's methods of operations. MSORT members have built lasting liaisons with other region 5 tactical teams to include Iowa State Patrol. This has helped the department to establish common ground in both tactics and operational standards with the other area teams and these contacts have given us valuable resources we can draw upon should the need ever arise.

## **Activities**

As stated above MSORT members participate in 152+ hours of training per year. Members train at handling various scenarios which will cover everything from high risk search warrants, barricade/hostage situations to active shooter situations. The MSORT also trains in a variety of environments and learns tactics associated with tubular assaults, vehicle assaults, and residential assaults as well as commercial and industrial assaults. This training will often involve the use of role

players which helps make the training as realistic as possible. In the past, the MSORT has conducted training for the entire patrol division on how to handle an active shooter situation. This department wide training also included training on the incident command system and the department's all hazards plan. The MSORT has worked with several local companies and the Muscatine Community School District, GPC, Monsanto and HNI regarding preparedness for such events and trained in their facilities using their employees/students. In 2022 MSORT provided Rescue Task Force training to multiple agencies in Cedar County, IA, as well as for the Muscatine Police and Fire Department. This effort aims at providing continuity of response to are law enforcement and EMS providers.

MSORT was able to secure a used ambulance from the Bennett Ambulance service. This vehicle is diesel fueled, four wheel drive and has the capacity to store and transport all MSORT tools and equipment as well as six seated team members and an additional eight standing if needed.

MSORT was able to showcase its capabilities to area administrations as well donors who have provided financial assistance for equipment purchases. This event allowed for observation and explanation of negotiations equipment, robot and pole camera, armored vehicle and transport ambulance, less lethal and chemical munitions as well as explosive breaching. All participants were receptive and supportive of our operational capacity and competence.

MCSO Deputy/MSORT team member Lane and his K9 partner Neiko were successfully implemented into the team during 2022. Lane and Neiko participated in many residential assault scenarios, business assault scenarios as well as vehicle assaults. Other team members gained confidence working around the K9 as well as Neiko being desensitized to working around numerous team members. A rural off-lead tactic was also practiced to combat armed subject barricaded in a wooded or off-road setting. An off-lead K9, paired with a drone outfitted with a thermal camera, provided a successful resolution to this scenario without endangering team members.

Operationally, MSORT was called out on 4 occasions in 2022 and provided assistance on 1 other. These call outs were for a barricaded subject, drug warrants and search/arrest warrants and stolen weapons traffickers. The following is a result of the operations conducted in 2022:

5 felony arrests, 11.8 grams of methamphetamine seized, 8 firearms seized (1 being reported stolen).

MSORT will continue to strive for improvement and is always looking for new ways in which the team can better serve the citizens of Muscatine, Muscatine County, Cedar County and Louisa County. The MSORT will continue to seek out training opportunities which offer new tactics and equipment that will help improve our efficiency and expand on our ability to handle the situations the team is called upon for.

MSORT has brought on several new members and will be looking to send them to Basic SWAT courses in May of 2023. Existing members and their experience will be used to provide a patrol-type training to departments within the service area. Curriculum is being created and input from target agencies will be sought prior to implementation.

The team will continue to serve search warrants, respond to barricades and will train for hostage rescue. MSORT will strive to meet NTOA standards of 192 hours of training a year. MSORT is able to identify themselves as a Tier 2 team according to NTOA and will consist of a minimum of 19 total members from command down to entry and snipers. MSORT will make every effort to provide better services to the citizens of Muscatine, Muscatine County, Cedar and Louisa County and the surrounding area in which it serves.



## **JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAM**

This Juvenile Diversion Program is a collaborative effort involving Juvenile Court Services, The Muscatine Community School District, Muscatine Police Department, Muscatine County Sheriff's Office, Wilton Police Department, and West Liberty Police Department.

The goal of the juvenile Diversion Program brings together individuals and teams of law enforcement officers, probation staff, prosecutors, school officials, judges, policy-makers, and other local leaders who are committed to strengthening their diversion efforts. Personnel involved in the diversion program receive in-depth training and guidance from national experts on innovative juvenile diversion policies, practices and programs while also benefiting from networking and learning across jurisdictions.

The Muscatine Diversion Program instructs students in corrective thinking methods, goal setting and behavior chain strategies just to name a few topics. Participants are required to virtually participate in classroom activities and take personal responsibility for their actions. Parental support is a pillar of the diversion program and a parent or guardian must be connected to their student for graduation to be achieved.

In 2022, thirty-five (35) juveniles were referred to the program. Of all referrals, twenty-two (22) have attended. Ten (10) of the referrals failed to attend and two (1) were declined by Juvenile Court Services. Currently, two referrals are pending

Overall, the success of the Juvenile Diversion Program has been high. Collectively, total referrals to the program since inception (August 2018) netted two-hundred ten (210). One hundred fifty-six (156) have attended with only thirty three (33) reoffenders. This is an approximately 84% non-recidivism rate of those referred to the program. At the national level the non-recidivism rate for juvenile attending diversion is approximately 80%.

## WHAT ELSE DO WE DO?

Extra duty assignments have become a necessity within the Muscatine Police Department. Many non-probationary and probationary officers alike within the department are involved in an extra duty expertise, with many officers being committed to more than one area. Their dedication to the City of Muscatine in their perspective areas forces them to work additional hours outside of the traditional forty-hour work week. Some of the assignments include:

- Field Training Officers
- Firearms Instructors
- Muscatine Special Operations Response Team
- Hostage Negotiators
- Crime Scene Technicians
- Defensive Tactics Instructors
- Defensive Driving Instructors
- Chemical Munitions Instructors
- K-9 Handler
- School Resource Officers
- Accident reconstructionist

These listed assignments are a vital part of the effectiveness of the Muscatine Police Department. We are fortunate to have police officers who are dedicated to these programs and realize the vital part they play in offering a professionally versatile and well-rounded law enforcement service to the citizens of Muscatine.

Along with these additional duties comes the requirement of additional training to maintain certifications, as well as continuing education requirements, as many of these areas are ever-changing. The officers involved in these assignments are required to keep themselves current in new techniques being developed in things such as Defensive Tactics, Crime Scene Technician, Firearms Instruction, etc... Officers also need to keep up with the new case law that is developed in their areas of expertise to help protect the City, the officers they train and themselves from unnecessary liability. The training involved in maintaining these Instructor Certifications make up much of the Departments training budget.

Some additional assignments are needed to keep pace with the growing demand from the public to deal effectively with identity thefts, exploitation of minors (preying on minors via the internet) and other cybercrimes such as these.



## **Conclusions**

The year 2022 was a successful year that came with many changes and continued changes into 2023. We had to navigate through losing four (4) officers and the current transition with a new Police Chief. We will continue to push recruitment and retention in 2023 and look to have a full roster with 41 boots on the ground by the end of 2023.

The Muscatine Police Department continues to maintain our accredited status. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) assess our department. Accreditation has helped our officers understand what is expected of them in relation to policy and procedure. The officers should be proud of this accomplishment. Accreditation would not have happened without their hard work and dedication. Accreditation helps us to maintain higher standards than most departments.

### **Five-Year Goals for the Police Department**

1. Maintain our accredited status through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).
2. Continue working towards a department demographics that closely mirrors the community.
3. A training facility and improvements for the Police Department.
4. Adequately prepare employees who will be promoted at the beginning of 2023. Succession planning is the key to continuity within the department. We will continue to provide the most effective and up to date training for all officers/supervisors as budget allows.
5. To continue to foster positive relationships within our community through community policing efforts
6. To keep up with current technology and provide the officers the best equipment to make their jobs easier.

The climate of law enforcement has seemed to improve in the year 2022. I commend all of the men and women who have gone above and beyond to keep our relationships with the community in good standings.

As 2022 ended, the Muscatine Police Department reflected on yet another great year of service to the community. This is an indication of the commitment to the community, excellence in organization, communication, leadership, and the loyalty of the men and women working in the Muscatine Police Department.

Chief Brett Talkington  
Muscatine Police Department

