

VIRGINIA BEACH SHERIFF'S OFFICE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**SHERIFF ROCKY HOLCOMB
FY 2023/2024**

Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office 2024 Annual Report

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Message from the Sheriff



Sheriff Rocky Holcomb

This was a historic year for the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office (VBSO). With the changing of the guard on Sept. 29, 2023, I was sworn in as Sheriff, succeeding Sheriff Ken Stolle, who faithfully served as High Constable for almost 14 years. What I inherited from this public servant of integrity, dignity and intelligence was a strong, well-grounded law enforcement agency that not only puts the citizens of Virginia Beach first, but also its employees. I couldn't have asked for a better mentor.

As the first sheriff in Virginia Beach history to rise through the ranks to the top position, I immediately began carving out my own path, which included adopting the leadership values of T.R.U.S.T., which stands for transparency, respect, unity, service and training. T.R.U.S.T. is our guiding principle at the VBSO, demonstrating our commitment to greater accountability and deeper connections with our community.

It has been a great first year, and I am proud of what the men and women of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office and I have accomplished together. A few of our accomplishments include:

- Creation of the VBSO's first Consumer Protection Unit to safeguard the wellbeing of our community members by equipping them with knowledge and tools to navigate the complex landscape of scams and fraud. Criminals have gone above and beyond in their fraud schemes by using technology, and even our own deputies' names, to scam innocent people out of thousands of dollars. Our mission extends beyond mere protection; it's about empowerment. Whether through educational workshops, timely alerts or personalized assistance, we stand as a steadfast ally toward a scam-free existence.
- Expansion of the office's Community Engagement efforts, including events such as the Turkey Bowl, which raises money to feed public school children in need, and the Easter Eggstravaganza. I plan to expand these efforts even further next year with a Splash into Summer at Ocean Breeze Waterpark and a Back-to-School Sk8 Bash. Team VBSO is quite literally everywhere in the community. We are shaking hands, educating people on what we do, and putting ourselves out there for more and more community-engagement events. Seeing us is believing in us.
- Establishment of the "Road to Hope," giving inmates a path to rehabilitation, because we all know that many of the people incarcerated in the Virginia Beach Correctional Center will eventually be back out in the community, living and working in our neighborhoods. We are giving inmates a chance to learn and grow during their

time with us, through job skills, education, substance abuse counseling and more. For example, earlier this year, some of our inmate trustees graduated from the first-ever ServSafe Food Handler and Management Certification course at the Virginia Beach Correctional Center. We've also held job fairs within the jail and implemented a program called "The Sound of BDO (Beating da Odds)", a music initiative.

- Implementation of a Senior Safety Seminar taught by our Emergency Response Team (ERT). The ERT has been inundated with requests for the seminar throughout the city – and we've already taught hundreds of seniors about situational awareness, how to communicate in an emergency and self-defense techniques. We are educating our senior citizens on how to avoid becoming victims of crime during this time of rising assaults against those age 65 and older.
- Expansion of our K9 Unit with Hampton Roads' first fentanyl-detecting K9, K9 Apollo, and woman handler, Master Deputy II C. Repass, both on the forefront of literally sniffing out this deadly drug that kills tens of thousands of people every year.
- Lobbying the Virginia Beach City Council to reinstate funding for the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program in Virginia Beach's 55 elementary schools. The newly formulated D.A.R.E. program teaches young children about the dangers of guns, gang activity, bullying and drug use and instills skills such as conflict resolution, de-escalation, emotional awareness, communication, self-esteem and self-control. Ten VBSO deputies recently completed D.A.R.E. training and are ready to get into our elementary schools and help reverse the troublesome trends we're seeing with the younger generation. We can't sit back and watch these kids fall through the cracks anymore.
- The VBSO's first two deputies to graduate from the Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD) Academy. This is part of our ongoing partnership with the VBPD and our mutual commitment to strengthening the Virginia Beach public safety team and adding layers of training to what our deputies already receive. We also started three more deputies in the VBPD's Option Six program, which provides additional law enforcement training.
- Partnering with the Department of Defense to become a SkillBridge Program employer, providing internships to active-duty service members preparing to leave the military, creating a bridge from their military service to civilian employment. This supports our veterans while bolstering our ranks with well-qualified deputy recruits.
- Starting an internal "podcast" called "Real Talk with Rocky: Your Questions, His Answers" in partnership with the City of Virginia Beach Creative Services Department. Quarterly, we gather questions from the ranks, which are asked by a

deputy moderator while Creative Services films. The recording is then shared via YouTube. It's all about transparency and giving the deputies an opportunity to be heard.

I'm extremely proud of the men and women of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office. We will continue to grow and provide opportunities to our employees and the inmate population. We also will continue to be strong contributors to the Virginia Beach public safety team and part of the reason why Virginia Beach is the safest city of its size in the nation. Serving as Sheriff of Virginia Beach has been the highest honor of my career, and I am excited about what our future will bring.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N.D. 'Rocky' Holcomb III". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

N.D. "Rocky" Holcomb III
Sheriff/High Constable

Sheriff's Biography

Sheriff Rocky Holcomb has served the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office (VBSO) since 1991 and, prior to his promotion to chief deputy in May 2018, served as captain of the Criminal Intelligence Unit and Classification Division.

As the VBSO's highest ranking deputy sheriff, he was sworn in as sheriff of Virginia Beach on Sept. 29, 2023, to succeed Sheriff Ken Stolle, who retired after 13 years as sheriff with two years left in his term. Sheriff Holcomb will serve until a special election is held. He is Virginia Beach's seventh sheriff and the first to rise through the ranks, having started as a deputy sheriff recruit.



Sheriff Holcomb dropping the first puck at the Norfolk Admirals vs. Reading Royals game on April 5, 2023.

Sheriff Holcomb's leadership values are encompassed by the acronym T.R.U.S.T.: Transparency, Respect, Unity, Service and Training.

During Sheriff Holcomb's career at the VBSO, he has served in every division, commanded the Emergency Response Team and championed efforts to improve mental health treatment for inmates, including creation of the Mental Health Housing Unit. He created the K9 Unit under the supervision of Undersheriff Brian Struzzieri, acquiring and training two canines to detect narcotics and explosives. The K9 Unit has grown to three canines,



Sheriff Holcomb recording the "Real Talk with Rocky" podcast for VBSO staff.

including Hampton Roads' first fentanyl-detecting canine paired with the VBSO's first female handler. As captain of the Classification Division, he was instrumental in creating the Reentry and Veterans programs.

In 2017, he won a special election to represent the 85th District in the Virginia House of Delegates. He served during the 2017 legislative session, helping successfully carry bills to improve mental health treatment for jail inmates (HB2184) and expand access to contraception (HB2267).

On Aug. 12, 2021, the Virginia Beach City Council unanimously appointed him to fill the unexpired term for the Kempsville District (District 1) on City Council, and he won a special election to keep the seat on Nov. 8, 2022. He served as liaison to many different boards,

committees and commissions prior to resigning on Sept. 29, 2023, before becoming sheriff.

Sheriff Holcomb is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps with an honorable discharge. After joining the VBSO, he earned his bachelor's degree in organizational leadership and management from Regent University and graduated from the West Point Leadership Course.

He is an active volunteer, dedicating his time to the Pungo Strawberry Festival, Kempsville Meadows Elementary School and Mt. Trashmore Family YMCA.

He and his wife, Tracie, have been married for 29 years and have two children, Summer and Norman.



Office of the Sheriff

City of Virginia Beach



Mission Statement

The mission of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office is to provide for the public safety of the citizens of Virginia Beach through the efficient and professional operations of the Sheriff's Office as provided for in the Constitution and the Code of Virginia.

Organizational Values

Through teamwork and in partnership with the community, the shared values to which we as an organization must aspire include:

Commitment:	We will stand firm in our commitment as the safety and security of all persons in our care and custody and those persons for whom we serve are paramount.
Integrity:	We will earn and maintain the trust of our citizens by being personally and professionally accountable to the highest ethical and moral standards. We will conduct ourselves above reproach, mindful of the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality, and justice, with the courage to uphold these convictions, free from prejudices and bias.
Compassion:	We will be responsive and empathetic to the welfare of all persons and each other. We will treat everyone with dignity, respect and understanding.
Professionalism:	We will provide quality service through motivated, dedicated and well-trained employees. Our actions, attitudes and appearance will demonstrate self-discipline, attention to duty and service to our community.

Statutory Authority

§ 15.2-1609. Sheriff.

The voters in every county and city shall elect a sheriff unless otherwise provided by general law or special act. The sheriff shall exercise all the powers conferred and perform all the duties imposed upon sheriffs by general law. He shall enforce the law or see that it is enforced in the locality from which he is elected; assist in the judicial process as provided by general law; and be charged with the custody, feeding and care of all prisoners confined in the county or city jail. He may perform such other duties, not inconsistent with his office, as may be requested of him by the governing body. The sheriff shall be elected as provided by general law for a term of four years.

Services of the Sheriff's Office

The services provided by the Sheriff's Office are divided into two primary divisions:

OPERATIONS	ADMINISTRATION
<p>Correctional Operations & Administration Provides for the care and custody of people admitted into the Virginia Beach Correctional Center, including safety and security, food, medical care, and access to educational and work opportunities. Includes the Emergency Response Team.</p> <p>Correctional Support Processes arrestees for all law enforcement agencies utilizing the Virginia Beach Correctional Center under a contract with the City, which is 100% locally funded. This involves fingerprinting and photographing each arrestee. Keeps inmate records, handles laundry, property and mail for the jail, and runs the Reentry and Alternative Sentencing programs, including Weekenders.</p> <p>Criminal Intelligence Unit/Classification/K9 Investigates and prosecutes any criminal misconduct or rule violation committed by</p>	<p>Courts/Civil Process/Transportation Provides security and order in the various Virginia Beach courts and processes and serves civil documents received from the courts. Transports juvenile and adult offenders to and from court, medical appointments, and state and local correctional facilities.</p> <p>Training Provides staff training to include indoctrination, Basic Academy and ongoing in-service training. Includes the Honor Guard and Auxiliary Deputy Program.</p> <p>Administration & Human Resources Provides human resources, procurement services and financial administration/accounting. Includes the Public Information Office, which responds to requests from the public and the media and manages internal and external communications, including social media.</p>

<p>those persons incarcerated within the Virginia Beach Correctional Center. Also assists with other law enforcement investigations. Is responsible for all inmate housing assignments as well as screening inmates for work and life programs, such as the GED, Substance Abuse, Workforce and Trusty programs. Maintains compliance with Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards.</p> <p>Inmate Services Operates the Canteen and the Inmate and Staff kitchens.</p>	<p>Community Engagement Oversees community engagement and involvement, including all office volunteer efforts. Is responsible for VBSO recruitment efforts and oversees the Recruitment Team.</p>
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Professional Standards Office & Accountability

Develops, implements and ensures compliance with office policies and procedures. Investigates all internal and external complaints, serious incidents and policy violations. Oversees Sheriff’s Office emergency planning and operations. Maintains compliance with state accreditation standards, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules.

Sheriff’s Aide

Serves as executive aide to the Sheriff and is responsible for all maintenance functions of the Correctional Center and Law Enforcement Training Academy. Also serves as the liaison with City Information Technology.



Awards, Promotions & Retirements

Awards

Deputy of the Quarter

Deputy Garret Pendleton – Fall 2023
Master Deputy Gerald Wells – Spring 2024



Civilian of the Quarter

Mercifina Francisco – Fall 2023
Dawn Beers – Spring 2024

Promotions

Chief Deputy (from Captain)

Chief Deputy Alvie Culanding
Chief Deputy Christina Mapes

Captain (from Lieutenant)

Capt. Nicholas Curtis
Capt. Jane Harvey
Capt. Karen Johnson
Capt. Gregg O'Neil
Capt. Lois Thompson

Lieutenant (from Sergeant)

Lt. Alecia Driscoll
Lt. Timothy Grindle
Lt. Deanna Harvey
Lt. Lisa Hicks
Lt. Kelvin Kidd
Lt. Mark Kimener
Lt. Demetrius Taylor
Lt. Janine Uzzle
Lt. Ryan Velazquez

Sergeant (from Corporal)

Sgt. Michaela Kearly
Sgt. Brandon Speers

Sergeant (from Master Deputy)

Sgt. Anthony Edwards
Sgt. Jeanette Franklin
Sgt. Eric Goldstein

Sgt. Michael Houk
Sgt. Amy Jachimiak
Sgt. Jesse McCartney
Sgt. William O'Dell
Sgt. William Page
Sgt. Jeffery Pearson
Sgt. Krystal Peelish
Sgt. Mathew Pierson
Sgt. Ashana Standard
Sgt. Gerald Wells
Sgt. Aaron Whitehead

Civilians

Diane Amoss (Administrative Specialist II)
Kimberly Coley (Account Clerk II)
Ronna Donley (Financial Specialist)
Kelsey Grunder (Public Safety Analyst II)
Jessica White (Administrative Specialist II)

Retirements

Sheriff Kenneth Stolle – 13 years
Capt. Thomas Williams – 30 years
Capt. Kathy Vargas – 28 years
Lt. Billy Gilbert – 20 years
Sgt. Jane Jones – 23 years
Sgt. John Gibbs – 22 years
Sgt. Joseph Franze – 21 years
Sgt. Kenneth Brown – 20 years
Sgt. Kelvin Weldon – 20 years
Cpl. Hope Bryant – 28 years
Cpl. Kathleen Deyo – 25 years
Master Deputy II Francis Monahan – 19 years
Master Deputy I Matthew Lindsey – 20 years
Master Deputy I Johnnie Oglesby – 20 years
Master Deputy Von Freudenberg – 11 years
Deputy II Michael Limbo – 8 years
Ralph Latta Jr. – 30 years
Kimberly Bailey – 6 years

Thank you for your incredible service to the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office and City of Virginia Beach.

Fiscal Year Highlights

Changing of the Guard



Left to right: Undersheriff Brian Struzzieri, Sheriff Rocky Holcomb and former Sheriff Ken Stolle at Virginia Beach City Hall the day of Sheriff Holcomb's swearing-in.

In an historic event, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office on Sept. 29, 2023, held a changing of the guard with the retirement of former Sheriff Ken Stolle and swearing-in of Sheriff Rocky Holcomb. The event took place at Virginia Beach City Hall, attended by dignitaries from throughout the commonwealth.

Former Sheriff Stolle honorably served for 13 years as sheriff of Virginia Beach, having won elections in 2009, 2013, 2017 and 2021. He announced his retirement in August 2023 after 43 years of public service, having served in the Virginia Beach Police Department, U.S. Navy Reserve, Senate of Virginia and Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office.

During his 13-year tenure, Sheriff Stolle successfully transitioned back into society, achieved pay parity with the Virginia Beach Police Department, implemented body-worn cameras, completed a \$5 million upgrade to the jail's Master Control, created an Alternative Sentencing Program for nonviolent offenders, led the VBSO to become Virginia Values Veterans and Prison Rape Elimination Act certified, and expanded the VBSO's footprint in the community, including appointing the office's first liaison to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. He was a champion for mental health and developed, funded and implemented an innovative mental health program in the jail, resulting in a 98% success rate.

His retirement celebration was held on Oct. 1, 2023, at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts, attended by



Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin speaking at former Sheriff Ken Stolle's retirement celebration at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts.

hundreds of people, including Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, former Virginia Govs. George Allen, Jim Gilmore, Bob McDonnell and Sen. Mark Warner, Virginia Beach Mayor Bob Dyer, Virginia Sens. Dick Saslaw and Tommy Norment, retired Virginia Beach Circuit Court Judge Thomas Padrick, retired Virginia Beach Police Chief Jake Jacocks and many more.



Sheriff Rocky Holcomb taking the oath of office.

Chief Deputy Rocky Holcomb has served the VBSO since 1991 and is the office's highest ranking deputy sheriff. He was promoted to chief deputy in May 2018.

Pursuant to Virginia code section § 24.2-228.1, Sheriff Holcomb – as the highest-ranking deputy sheriff at the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office – was sworn in as the seventh sheriff of Virginia Beach. He will serve until a special election is held to complete former Sheriff Stolle's term, which ends on Dec. 31, 2025. A special election is scheduled for Nov. 5, 2024.

Saving Money for the City of Virginia Beach & Taxpayers

The Sheriff's Office is always looking for ways to save taxpayers money and generate revenue to offset the cost of operations. Those efforts include the Inmate Canteen, through which inmates may purchase clothing, hygiene items, snacks and other goods. The Sheriff's Office also offers CareMart, which allows inmates' friends and families to purchase meals, care packages and other items for their loved ones online. Per state code, revenue from Canteen sales must go toward programs to benefit the inmates, whereas revenue from CareMart sales may be used for operational expenses. Fees added onto these purchases also help fund inmate programs, such as the Reentry Program. **Gross sales for the 2023-2024 fiscal year totaled \$639,154 for the Canteen and \$2.8 million for CareMart.**

The Sheriff's Office also generates revenue by selling advertisements for the Inmate Rulebook and the television screens displayed in the Courthouse and the Correctional Center Intake Lobby. **Ad sales totaled \$29,150** this fiscal year.

In addition, the Sheriff's Office saves the taxpayers money by utilizing inmates to work in the community and in the Correctional Center. The Inmate Trusty and Workforce programs also allow inmates to use their time in a productive way and teach them valuable skills. In exchange for their services, inmates who volunteer for the Trusty and Workforce programs receive additional food and visitation privileges and may also earn time off their sentences.

A yearly end-of-summer picnic, Thanksgiving and Christmas breakfasts, and cookouts throughout the year recognize Workforce inmates' hard work.

Inmates in the Trusty Program also provide cleaning and maintenance services throughout the Correctional Center, prepare and serve meals for their fellow inmates, wash laundry and help with other tasks. **This year 69 inmates volunteered for the Trusty Program, working 198,785 hours and saving taxpayers approximately \$2.4 million.**



The Inmate Workforce clearing the overgrown Brown Family Cemetery, a historical site.

The Workforce Division is staffed by 12 deputies who oversee inmate work crews, including one sergeant. The Inmate Workforce Program takes approximately 15-20 inmates out into the community to work. They must meet certain criteria to qualify, ensuring the safety of both the inmates and the public.

At little to no cost to taxpayers, these inmates assist with landscaping and maintenance of City property, City office moves, snow removal, litter removal, and cleaning the Virginia Beach Law Enforcement Training

Academy and VBSO office spaces, gym and Staff Kitchen. They also provide tent setup for various community and charitable events, such as Fil Fest and the Virginia African American Cultural Center Fall Festival. The Workforce staff also volunteer their off-duty time to clean up in residential and commercial areas, when needed.

This year, the Sheriff's Workforce had seven contracts/Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the City for landscaping, clearing of Public Utilities Meter Easements and Waste Management Landfill areas, janitorial services, painting City pump houses and water stations, event cleanup, litter removal and other work. These contracts come at a large savings to the City compared to the cost of hiring private contractors. Since the Workforce inmates are volunteers, the revenue to the Sheriff's Office goes toward offsetting the cost of running the Correctional Center, which in return saves the City money. The deputies who are assigned to the Workforce division are paid by the Sheriff's Office. **This year, those contracts generated \$721,967, which was applied to the City's obligated share of Correctional Center expenses.**

In total this fiscal year, the Workforce inmates volunteered 29,238 hours at a taxpayer savings of approximately \$350,856. The VBSO Workforce Division continues to strive to be self-sufficient by generating enough revenue to fund its deputy positions and operations and ensure consistent provision of quality services to the citizens of Virginia Beach.

Road to Hope

This year Sheriff Rocky Holcomb created the Road to Hope, an initiative that gives offenders a path to rehabilitation, preparing them to transition from inmates to productive members of society. The Road to Hope encompasses the VBSO's Alternative Sentencing Programs, Supportive Housing, Rehabilitative Programs and Classification Programs.



A Reentry Program job fair at the Virginia Beach Correctional Center.

Alternative Sentencing Programs (ASP):

Reentry Program – The Reentry Program provides services to inmates who have six months or less left in their sentence, no extensive history of institutional violations and no drug distribution charges. Education is provided by certified Reentry counselors and completion time for the curriculum is approximately three months (based on the learning ability and participation of the inmate). Participation is voluntary. Inmates submit a request form and are contacted by a program coordinator if they are eligible. The goals are to:

- improve offenders' quality of life and address co-occurring problems through the provision of educational services;
- reduce recidivism;
- foster commitment to a violence-free and crime-free lifestyle; and
- promote a prosocial community.

The Reentry Program also offers job fairs for soon-to-be-released inmates.

Offender Support Unit (OSU) – Candidates for the OSU program are selected by submitting an Inmate Request Form, but they may also be court-ordered into the program. Inmate Request Forms and court orders are put through an application check phase to see if the candidate is eligible to participate. Criteria includes 12 months or less left on their active sentence, no mandatory jail time, reliable transportation, and mandatory random drug and alcohol testing.

Deputies who work in the VBSO's Alternative Sentencing Program select OSU offenders' job assignments, which can include working in Virginia Beach Correctional Center (VBCC) Intake, the Canteen, the Power Shift cleaning crew, City of Virginia Beach Waste Management, and/or Virginia Beach Animal Control. The cost to participate in the OSU is \$5 per day and a one-time \$50 processing fee.

Electronic Home Incarceration Program (EHIP) – Candidates may be selected for this program by submitting an Inmate Request Form or may be court-ordered into the program. Inmate Request Forms and court orders are put through an application check phase to see if the candidate is eligible to participate. Criteria includes 12 months or less left on active sentence, no violent or criminal sex offenses, gainful employment, and consent to placement of equipment in inmate’s residence.

The cost to participate in this program is \$10 per day for equipment and monitoring fees and a one-time \$50 processing fee. Inmates are allowed to be employed or attend school; however, employment must be in Virginia Beach unless ordered by the court. If not employed, EHIP inmates are placed under house arrest and can only depart their residence with the permission of the Alternative Sentencing deputies for medical appointments, etc. Inmates are required to report to the VBCC on Sundays for urinalysis. In addition, Alternative Sentencing deputies are responsible for visiting these inmates at their residence or place of employment. Inmates are tracked with GPS using an ankle-worn monitoring device.

Weekender Program – This is a court-ordered program that allows offenders to serve their time on weekends (or other nonconsecutive days) in order to maintain employment and/or meet family caretaking obligations. Weekenders report to the VBCC on Friday evening and leave Sunday afternoon rather than serving their time all at once (straight time). In order to qualify for the program, inmates must first pay all outstanding balances from any previous jail stays at the VBCC. Weekenders must also pay a \$50 processing fee and \$7 per day to participate in the program. If an inmate violates program rules and regulations, they may be detained and required to serve their remaining jail sentence on straight time.

This year 2,528 inmates served time in the Weekender Program.

In addition, because the mobile DMV Connect program is no longer being offered at the Virginia Beach Correctional Center (at DMV’s request), the ASP staff provide a notarized jail identification letter to inmates being released from the facility so that they can make an appointment and obtain an I.D. from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles after their release. Having a state-issued I.D. is essential for finding employment, opening a bank account and applying for other services that are important for inmates’ reentry into society. **Staff issued 85 of these letters this year.**

Supportive Housing

Veterans Block – Housing unit (or block) for inmates with military service backgrounds. Inmates volunteer to be housed in the Veterans Block using an Inmate Request Form. Standard Classification and housing rules apply. The VBSO is currently working with the local Veterans Affairs office to solicit help providing veterans with post-incarceration assistance.



The Sound of BDO with Brandon "Shaggy" Stokes at the Z104 studio.

Rehabilitative Programs

The Sound of BDO (Beat da Odds) – Gives VBCC inmates the opportunity to try out for a chorus of singers, and eventually musicians, who will perform at concerts in the fall and during the holidays. This program is a joint effort with the VBSO, Brandon "Shaggy" Stokes from Z104, Audacy (the owner of Z104 and other radio stations), iHeartRadio, and local music producers Brian Reid and Stuart McCloud. Music can transform people and their behavior. Participating in a program like this can help inmates build social skills and improve their communication. In

addition, by participating in music therapy sessions, inmates can learn how to work together, communicate effectively and build meaningful relationships. Music allows inmates to speak directly about trauma, emotion and joy in a way that compliments rehabilitative efforts and encourages emotional and social development. Their growth depends on their ability to interact with an audience. This program also helps inmates confront their past and their future, while helping them cope with the present in a positive manner. BDO is not just about entertainment; it's about offering a chance for personal growth and a path toward a brighter future, both for the inmates and the community.

Classification Programs

Inmate Work Programs – Inmate work programs constitute a vital component of the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts within the VBCC, offering incarcerated individuals a path to personal growth, skill development, and meaningful contribution to both the facility and the broader community. Through a combination of structured work assignments, vocational training and opportunities for financial restitution, these programs serve as a foundation of inmate rehabilitation and preparation for a successful return to society. In essence, inmate work programs represent a win-win proposition for both incarcerated individuals and the community at large. These programs not only promote rehabilitation and reintegration, but also foster a sense of dignity, purpose and contribution for participants. Through their labor and dedication, inmates become agents of positive change, transforming their lives and making meaningful contributions to society, both behind bars and beyond.

- **Trusty** – The role of a trusty within the correctional system is multifaceted, encompassing a range of responsibilities and benefits that extend beyond the confines of traditional incarceration. Trusted with various tasks and services essential for the smooth operation of the facility, trusties play a vital role in maintaining order, safety, cleanliness and efficiency within the jail environment

while also offering inmates opportunities for personal growth, skill development and reduced sentences. Trustees assigned to the inmate or staff kitchen acquire valuable competencies, such as refining their culinary skills and mastering the operation of commercial-grade kitchen equipment. The Trusty Program represents a unique opportunity for inmates to engage in meaningful work, earn valuable incentives and cultivate essential life skills while incarcerated. Through their dedication and hard work, trustees become integral members of the VBCC community, embodying the principles of responsibility, accountability and positive contribution.



A summer appreciation picnic for the Workforce Inmates.

- **Workforce** – At the core of the Workforce Program are the services provided by participants, which encompass essential tasks such as lawn care and maintenance, canteen services, cleaning and logistical support for events. From mowing lawns and landscaping to assisting with event setup and furniture moving, participants in the Workforce Program play a vital role in ensuring the smooth operation of the VBCC while also providing valuable services to external stakeholders and the broader

community. The Workforce Program represents a holistic approach to inmate rehabilitation, combining meaningful work opportunities with tangible incentives and skill-development initiatives. By providing Workforce inmates with the means to earn time off their sentences, financial restitution for fines and court costs, and valuable vocational skills, the program promotes accountability and responsibility and fosters a sense of hope, purpose and empowerment as they prepare for life beyond incarceration. Through their dedication and hard work, Workforce participants become agents of positive change, transforming their lives and contributing to the betterment of society as a whole.

The selection process for participation in inmate work programs involves a meticulous assessment of applicants' criminal background and institutional history to ensure suitability and safety. This thorough evaluation considers various factors including past criminal offenses, institutional behavior and gang involvement. Inmates with a history of violent crimes, gang affiliation, escape attempts or problematic conduct within the VBCC are ineligible.

Applicants must have a comprehensive medical evaluation to assess their physical health and fitness for work assignments. This medical screening ensures that participants are medically safe to perform tasks both inside and outside the jail environment. By identifying

any underlying health concerns or limitations, this evaluation helps mitigate the risk of injury or health complications while performing their work duties, safeguarding the wellbeing of the inmates and promoting a safe working environment.



Inmate trustees preparing meals in the Inmate Kitchen.

This rigorous selection process underscores the VBSO's commitment to safety, security and accountability within the inmate work programs. By carefully screening participants based on their criminal history, institutional behavior, and medical fitness, the program aims to mitigate risks, promote a positive work environment, and maximize the potential for successful rehabilitation and reintegration. Through this selective approach, inmates who demonstrate a genuine commitment to personal growth and positive change are given the opportunity to participate in meaningful work experiences that contribute to their overall wellbeing and readiness for successful reentry into society.

Educational Programs – The GED (General Educational Development) and Jail Education Program (JEP) initiatives serve as beacons of opportunity within the VBCC, offering inmates a pathway to personal growth and empowerment during their incarceration. Designed with the aim of fostering self-improvement and enhancing productivity, these programs stand as pivotal instruments of transformation for individuals seeking to better themselves.

- **GED** – The GED component of the program stands as a testament to the commitment to education within the VBCC. Through the dedicated efforts of educators, inmates are provided with comprehensive support and guidance on their journey toward achieving their GED certificate. This educational endeavor equips participants with essential academic competencies and empowers them with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of contemporary society. The attainment of GED credentials marks an academic milestone and serves as a symbol of resilience and determination in the face of adversity. The Virginia Beach Adult Learning Center serves as a pivotal hub for GED certification, embodying the VBSO's collaborative spirit of community engagement and educational advocacy.
- **JEP (Special Education)** – In parallel, the Special Education component of the program, known as the JEP, caters to the unique needs of younger inmates (age 22 and below) who have special educational requirements. Recognizing the diverse learning profiles and individualized support needed for this demographic, the JEP offers a tailored curriculum aimed at facilitating academic progress and personal development. Through partnership with Virginia Beach City Public Schools, inmates enrolled in the JEP are afforded the opportunity to earn a high school diploma from

the school located in their housing district. The JEP serves as a testament to the VBSO's commitment to inclusivity and equitable access to education, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background or circumstance, are equipped with the tools necessary to pursue their aspirations and contribute positively to society.



A chaplain volunteer distributing donated holiday packages to inmates.

Chaplains Program (Life Empowerment) – The Chaplains Program, often referred to as the Life Empowerment Program, stands as a cornerstone of spiritual nourishment and personal development within the VBCC, offering inmates a sanctuary for introspection, guidance and growth. Rooted in the principles of faith and compassion, this program serves as a beacon of hope, providing individuals with the tools and resources necessary to embark on a journey of self-discovery and transformation. Participation in the Chaplains Program is contingent upon meeting certain eligibility criteria.

Disqualifiers, such as current housing status (maximum security) and jail behavior (institutional violations), may preclude individuals from enrolling in the program. While these criteria serve as necessary safeguards for maintaining order and safety within the jail, they also underscore the importance of accountability and personal responsibility in the journey toward rehabilitation and redemption.

Substance Abuse Program – The Substance Abuse Program exists as a comprehensive and structured initiative within the VBCC, providing a lifeline of support and resources for inmates grappling with addiction. Through a combination of targeted interventions and holistic approaches, this program aims to guide individuals toward recovery, empower them with essential life skills, and ultimately facilitate their successful reintegration into society. Structured as a 16-week curriculum, the Substance Abuse Program offers participants a comprehensive framework for recovery and rehabilitation. Through a carefully curated curriculum, inmates are guided through the stages of change, from acknowledging the need for transformation to acquiring the tools and skills necessary to maintain sobriety and make healthier life choices post-release. Participation in the Substance Abuse Program may be voluntary or court-ordered as part of sentencing. This legal mandate underscores the recognition of substance abuse as a significant contributing factor to criminal behavior and the importance of addressing it through evidence-based interventions and treatment modalities.

VBSO Connect: Expanding Community Engagement

This year the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office expanded its Community Engagement efforts under the leadership of Sheriff Holcomb and newly promoted Community Engagement Capt. Karen "K.J." Johnson, adopting the moniker VBSO Connect.

Community outreach and engagement have always been a cornerstone of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office. With Sheriff Holcomb's reimagining of the Community Engagement Division (formerly the Community Outreach Division), those efforts gained new momentum this year.



Community Engagement Capt. Karen "K.J." Johnson



Sheriff Rocky Holcomb's Turkey Bowl at Kempsville High School. Team Public Safety won the inaugural trophy.

New efforts included Sheriff Rocky Holcomb's Turkey Bowl, a charity flag football game between Virginia Beach educators and public safety officers. **The inaugural event raised over \$3,700 for the Virginia Beach Education Foundation's Beach Bags program, which provides take-home bags of food for food-insecure public school students on weekends and school breaks.**

Another major new initiative was Sheriff Rocky Holcomb's Senior Safety Seminar, a free self-defense class for senior citizens taught by the VBSO's Emergency

Response Team. The class teaches situational awareness, attack motives, getting help and basic self-defense moves. Deputies have taught the class at libraries, the Creeds Senior Safety Center, recreational centers and more, with the goal of addressing the rise in attacks on seniors.

Coming up in the next year will be the Splash into Summer at Ocean Breeze Waterpark, Sheriff Rocky Holcomb's Back-to-School Skate Bash and "The Sound of BDO" concert featuring inmate choral group The Sound of Beat da Odds (BDO).

Read more about the VBSO's Community Engagement efforts on page 29.

Focusing on Transparency & Accountability

Commitment, integrity, compassion and professionalism are the cornerstones of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office, as it states in the VBSO's Organizational Values (page 7).

They are also central to Sheriff Holcomb’s leadership values, which are embodied by the acronym T.R.U.S.T.: transparency, respect, unity, service and training. Law enforcement cannot be successful without the trust and support of the community, which must be earned every day. To that end, Sheriff Rocky Holcomb and the Virginia Beach Sheriff’s Office hold their deputies to the highest standards of conduct and do not tolerate biased enforcement, excessive force or dishonesty of any kind.

The Virginia Beach Sheriff’s Office Code of Ethics states:

"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice.

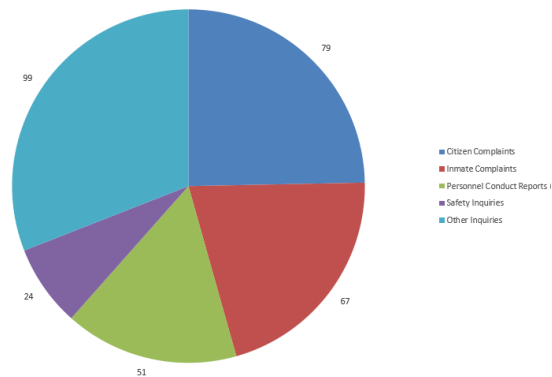
I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life. I will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudice animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice, or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession - law enforcement."

The VBSO Professional Standards Office (PSO) is responsible for investigating all serious incidents — including all in-custody deaths and uses of force — as well as potential policy violations, misconduct allegations, and internal and external complaints against the Sheriff’s Office and its appointees. **This year, PSO received 320 cases:**

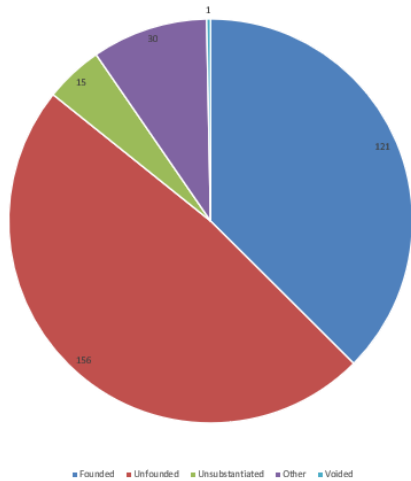
- **79 citizen complaints**
- **67 inmate complaints**
- **51 personnel conduct reports (PCRs)**
- **24 safety inquiries***



- **99 other inquiries****
- **0 Equal Employment Opportunity complaints**

*Safety inquiries include annual and pre-emptive health and safety inspections.

**Other inquiries include staff complaints, possible policy infractions, staff-involved vehicle accidents, conformance to laws and suicide attempts/deaths.



Results of those cases were as follows:

- **125 founded**
- **156 unfounded**
- **15 unsubstantiated**
- **30 other*****
- **1 voided******

Some cases may lead to multiple results/infractions, which may create a discrepancy in the overall total.

***Other is when there is a finding that is not founded, unfounded or unsubstantiated. It can include when an inspection is completed and when a duplicate or erroneous file is closed.

****Void is when a case is no longer needed.

Of the 125 founded cases, 67 were inquiries, 41 were PCRs, seven were inmate complaints and 10 were citizen complaints.

In addition, the Virginia Beach Police Department investigates any in-custody deaths that occur in the Virginia Beach Correctional Center. Those deaths are reported to the Virginia Department of Corrections, which also has the authority to investigate.

The Virginia Beach Sheriff’s Office is subject to oversight from numerous local, state and federal agencies and routinely receives outstanding audit, inspection and accreditation scores from those organizations.

Other agencies that have oversight over the Sheriff’s Office and/or Correctional Center include the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Marshal Service, Virginia Law Enforcement Accreditation Coalition, Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, the National Commission on Correctional Health Care and the Virginia Beach Department of Public Health (food safety).

The VBSO is fully accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC), which conducted its last reaccreditation assessment in October

2021. That assessment occurs every four years to ensure the Sheriff's Office's policies and procedures adhere to 190 state-mandated standards.

Additional information about VBSO accreditation is available starting on page 42.



Body-worn cameras docked at the Virginia Beach Correctional Center.

In an effort to improve transparency and accountability, the VBSO issued Axon body-worn cameras to its deputy sheriffs in 2023. **The Virginia Beach City Council provided funding for 400 cameras at the request of former Sheriff Ken Stolle.** As part of the camera deployment, the VBSO provided training to its deputy sheriffs and implemented policy governing their use, which was developed with input from the public, as required by law. That policy and additional information is available at vbso.net/body-worn-cameras.

In addition, after being approached by Lucky 8 productions, the VBSO invited a camera crew to film inside the Virginia Beach Correctional Center from March-June 2023, August 2023-January 2024 and May-June 2024. The footage, which focuses on the intake process, is part of the A&E reality television program, "Booked: First Day In", featuring several jails throughout the country. **Season 1 of the show had 16 episodes and aired in 2023. The first 14 episodes of Season 2 aired in mid-2024, and the show is scheduled to resume in the fall of 2024.** Episodes are available at aetv.com/shows/booked-first-day-in.

Providing Opportunities for Veterans

The Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office is providing new career opportunities for veterans by becoming a Department of Defense (DOD) SkillBridge Program provider. It welcomed its first soon-to-be U.S. Navy veteran as a deputy sheriff intern under the program this year.

SkillBridge is a DOD program that provides opportunities for active-duty service members to gain valuable work experience during their last 180 days of service. **The VBSO is now one of more than 116 Virginia private- and public-sector organizations/businesses that offer internship opportunities under SkillBridge to assist service members' transition from the military.**

The internships allow participants to build their resumes, explore employment interests, develop new job skills and gain additional work experience to help them successfully transition into the civilian workforce.

The VBSO's first hire with the program is Chief Petty Officer Jose Herrera, who is retiring from the Navy after nearly 21 years of service. He started with 16 other recruits on April 1, 2024, in the VBSO's Basic Academy Class 57, which is scheduled to graduate in July 2024.

Herrera is attending the Basic Academy while still employed with the military and will receive the same training and certification as other VBSO recruits. SkillBridge interns receive full military pay and benefits during their internship rather than being paid by the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office. Upon successfully graduating from the Basic Academy and separating from the military, Herrera will receive an offer of full-time employment as a sworn deputy with the VBSO.

The VBSO has been Virginia Values Veterans (V3) certified since 2016, which means it meets state benchmarks for hiring, retaining and promoting veterans. Approximately one third of the VBSO workforce has served in the military.

Strengthening Our Partnership with the VBPD

For the first time, deputies from the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office this year attended the Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD) Academy, undergoing 24 weeks of joint law enforcement training.

This is the first time that members of the VBSO have attended the VBPD Academy, part of the departments' ongoing partnership and commitment to strengthening the Virginia Beach public safety team. Deputy Willis Tomblin and Deputy Nelson Alvarez attended the academy alongside 31 VBPD police recruits, graduating on June 21, 2024, and beginning their field training. They have both been deputy sheriffs since 2022.



Deputies Willis Tomblin and Nelson Alvarez.

The VBSO also continues to serve as a force multiplier for the VBPD during summer months at the Virginia Beach resort area, holiday weekends and major events.

Reinventing Mental Health Treatment

Mental health remains a top priority for the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office. **Five years ago, former Sheriff Ken Stolle successfully lobbied the Virginia General Assembly for nearly \$1 million to fund a comprehensive new program to improve mental health treatment in Virginia Beach. That program launched in the fall of 2019 and the General Assembly subsequently expanded the funding to \$3 million for three years.** Due to

sound fiscal management, that funding was stretched to cover the fourth year of the program. State and local funding will be sought to continue the program into the future, and the Virginia Sheriffs' Association plans to push for its implementation state-wide.

Under the program, Virginia Beach Department of Human Services (DHS) staff members were integrated into the Virginia Beach Correctional Center under a first-of-its-kind initiative to divert, screen, assess and treat individuals with a mental illness and/or substance use disorder before, during and after incarceration. **The funding provided 12 DHS positions to staff the program, which is a joint effort between the Sheriff's Office, its medical provider and the DHS, which includes the Community Services Board, Adult Correctional Services, and Community Corrections and Pretrial.**

Changes under the program included:

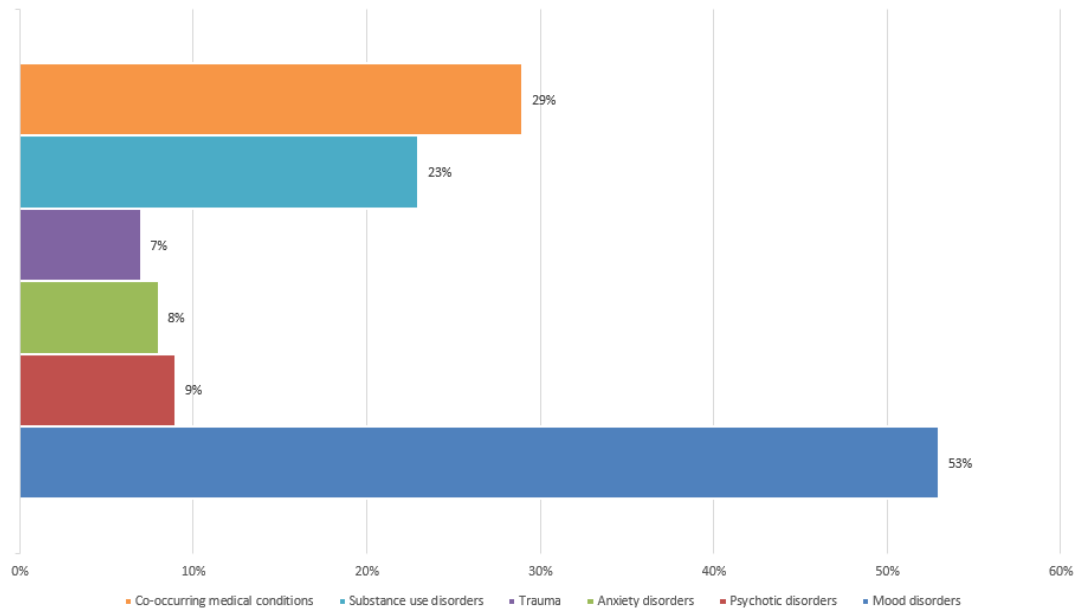
- Provision of a comprehensive, evidence-based tool to screen all inmates for mental illness within 24-48 hours of booking into the Virginia Beach Correctional Center, followed by a full diagnostic screening within three days via the jail's medical provider;
- On-site staffing to provide mental health screenings, obtain medical and psychiatric records, and advocate for diversion for treatment outside the jail;
- Improved monitoring and oversight of inmates with mental illness;
- Comprehensive discharge and reentry planning to link inmates to available housing, counseling, family support and an adequate supply of medication upon their release; and
- Follow-up with former inmates within five days of release from jail to ensure continued access to medication, psychiatric appointments, etc.

Eventually the program will also include a new family education and engagement program to support inmates' successful reintegration with family. Until then, DHS staff work with inmates' families as they transition back into the community.

The program has had tremendous results and was called "wildly successful" by WAVY TV10. In the past, the VBSO estimated that 35% of its inmate population suffered from a mental illness, while the Community Services Board estimated that number at just 10%. The problem is much larger. **Based on the 791 inmate screenings conducted this year, 100% suffered from at least one mood, psychotic, anxiety, substance use or trauma disorder. Their diagnoses were:**

- **53% mood disorders**

- **9% psychotic disorders**
- **8% anxiety disorders**
- **23% substance use disorders**
- **7% trauma**
- **29% co-occurring medical conditions**



The screenings also found that:

- **14% were homeless**
- **33% were previously incarcerated**
- **28% received previous treatment for behavioral health**
- **31% were insured**
- **51% had natural supports**

This year the program discharged 404 inmates from the jail after receiving treatment.

The results were promising:

- **67% were released with housing in place**
- **100% had an adequate supply of medications**
- **66% engaged in outpatient behavioral health appointments**
- **95% did not return to jail since reentering the community (compared with a nearly 100% recidivism rate for mentally ill offenders in the past)**
- **100% were linked to benefits, such as Medicaid, Social Security and food stamps**

The number of discharges was impacted by the fact that 455 inmates were released prior to completing the behavioral health admissions process and 274 refused services.

Preparing Inmates to Reenter Society

The Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office created the Reentry Program in August 2014 in an effort to reduce recidivism by providing offenders with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully integrate back into the community as productive members of society. The program was created without any additional funding from taxpayers. Instead, the Sheriff's Office utilized existing resources—including inmate fees—and partnered with state and local organizations, including the Virginia Beach Department of Human Services (DHS). The program is a part of the DHS's Jail Education Services (JES) and Adult Correctional Services (ACS) and includes classes in family dynamics, finances, employment skills, anger management, and complying with probation and child support, among other topics. Participants are called "returning citizens".



Inmates attending a Reentry Program job fair at the Virginia Beach Correctional Center.

In addition, the program works with the Virginia Department of Corrections and Virginia Beach Probation and Parole to provide home care plans and community resources for people leaving the jail. Reentry staff works with City Social Services and the Re-entry Council to provide job fairs, informational bulletins and other services. The program has offered financial classes through Bank On and previously partnered with Tidewater Community College to connect inmates with educational opportunities and trade skills once they are released from custody. The jail's telephone contractor has made calls to treatment and housing centers free to assist with inmates' reintegration

into society.

In total, over 485 inmates have graduated from the Reentry Program since its inception (with over 1,571 services provided). Services provided totaled 250 this fiscal year.

The Reentry Program held two job fairs this year, in August 2023 and April 2024. The events were held in conjunction with ACS and feature employers and resources for inmates preparing for release. They took place in the Virginia Beach Correctional Center Recreation Yard and were available to inmates with a release date within 60 days. **The second job fair featured 16 employers/organizations and 72 inmates attended.**

In addition, the VBSO is working to provide a greater range of reentry services to the entire jail population, which will be offered by Human Services Counselors from the Reentry Program.

Preventing Overdoses

In an effort to combat the rise in opioid overdoses in Virginia Beach and nationwide, the VBSO began making Narcan (Naloxone) available to its deputy sheriffs during the 2017-2018 fiscal year. **From June 2023 through July 2024, staff administered Narcan seven times, with four cases (57%) occurring inside the Correctional Center.** These incidents occurred once inside B3N (female medical housing), twice inside C2D (classification pod) and once inside the medical clinic. In the four cases inside the facility, the VBSO's medical contractor administered the Narcan, with deputies assisting with their issued Narcan in two of those cases. **Three cases (43%) occurred outside the jail (one in a private home, one on the public boardwalk and one while an inmate was in transit to the VBCC from another facility).** **Five cases occurred in 2023 (in July, August, October and twice in November) and two cases occurred in 2024 (in February and June).**

There are 101 Narcan kits distributed to staff and placed at specific VBCC locations, and 28 kits reserved for replenishment, as needed. Each Narcan kit contains two 4 mg doses. The kits are assigned to Civil Process, Transportation, Classification (K9 Unit), Courts, Workforce, Training and more. **On June 1, 2024, the VBSO obtained 30 additional kits from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Pharmacy Services to replace expired kits.** The expired kits were either returned to the VDH, deposited in the Virginia Beach Police Department's drug disposal boxes or sent to VBSO Training as training guides for the academies and in-service classes.

Supporting Our Community

The VBSO's extensive community involvement efforts are led by Community Engagement Capt. Karen "K.J." Johnson. Capt. Johnson also oversees Recruitment, including the VBSO Recruitment Team.

LGBT Liaison Master Deputy Heidi Evertson addresses the needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) community—both inside and outside the VBSO — and builds bridges between that community and law enforcement.



Capt. Karen "K.J." Johnson participating in a Community Outreach event at Liberty Military Housing.

The VBSO's volunteer efforts stretch through every part of the organization and touch many areas of the community. **During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Sheriff's Office logged a total of 201,124 volunteer hours with help from 566 volunteers**, including chaplains, civilian staff, sworn staff, auxiliary deputies, interns and inmates giving their time for the Workforce and Trusty programs. This equated to \$6.4 million in savings to Virginia Beach taxpayers. Auxiliary deputies supplement VBSO operations and participate in community events, including providing free child I.D. cards. They must maintain proficiency in firearms, defensive tactics, first aid and other skills.



The VBSO's 2024 Polar Plunge team

Sheriff Holcomb and the VBSO are ardent supporters of Special Olympics Virginia. VBSO deputies and civilians volunteer their time for various Special Olympics events throughout the year. These included the Little Feet Meet, Cover a Cruiser at Wawa and Tip-A-Cop. The VBSO also participated in the Polar Plunge and the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) to pass the Flame of Hope to the Norfolk Sheriff's Office as it made its way to open the 2024

Summer Games in Richmond. The office's Special Olympics efforts are led by the Sheriff's Aide Capt. Lois Thompson.

During this year's Polar Plunge, Sheriff Holcomb made Special Olympics Virginia athlete Travis Thereault an honorary VBSO community partner/ambassador. The title recognizes his support of the VBSO and involvement in the office's community engagement efforts.

The Sheriff's Office held five blood drives this year to support the American Red Cross, collecting 197 units of blood. It also raised money for charity through the Sheriff's Community Fund and volunteers for Virginia Beach Crime Solvers, The Salvation Army Christmas Depot and more, including:

- The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore, providing security for the three-day Mayflower Marathon food drive at Lynnhaven Mall;
- National Night Out; and

- The Virginia Beach Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 8 Christmas shopping event for underprivileged children (Cops & Kids).

The office is actively involved in Law Enforcement United and its annual Road to Hope, a 250-mile bicycle ride to Washington to honor fallen officers and raise money for their families and related charities.

The VBSO is also active in schools, with volunteers helping on the first day, serving as mentors, participating in the Lunch with a Deputy program and giving their time at other school events.

Other Community Engagement events this year included:

- First Responder’s Day at St. Matthew’s Catholic School
- Breakfast with a Deputy at Liberty Military Housing (child I.D.)
- Grand Opening of the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center
- VBPD Mounted Patrol Trunk or Treat
- Crossing Guard Appreciation Day (VBSO Connect was recognized for its unique contribution to this endeavor)
- Sheriff Holcomb’s Easter Eggstravaganza, Turkey Bowl and Skate into Summer
- Horizon Hampton Roads Career Exploration Day
- Navy Family Day – Norfolk
- Night to Shine prom night for special needs children
- Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs



The VBSO Easter Eggstravaganza

The Virginia Beach Sheriff’s Office Community Outreach Coordinator Gary Zalas is involved in numerous VBSO volunteer events, with his primary focus being providing child I.D.s and safety initiatives for senior citizens. He sits on the executive boards of both SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) and Virginia Beach TRIAD, which seek to arm senior citizens with the information they need to protect themselves and avoid becoming victims of crime. In addition, Mr. Zalas serves on the boards of Project Lifesaver, the Virginia Gang Investigators Association and Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia (SSEVA) and serves

as chair of SSEVA's Services Advisory Council. He is also a commissioner on the Mayor's Commission on Aging, is active in his local church and donates to the Sheriff Community Fund, Special Olympics Virginia, United Way and more.



Community Outreach Coordinator Gary Zalas (right) and Lt. M. Fleet at the annual Cops & Kids Christmas charity event.

This year Community Outreach Coordinator Zalas:

- **Participated in 198 events.**
- **Installed five large door viewers and conducted home safety assessments for seniors.**
- **Provided nine safety displays reaching over 435 seniors.**
- **Gave 12 PowerPoint presentations to various organizations reaching over 450 seniors concerning issues such as**

Senior Safety, Fraud and Scams, Summer Safety, TRIAD, Project Lifesaver and programs offered to seniors.

- **Delivered 178 5-pound boxes of non-perishable food to Comfort Care Seniors for Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia and conducted periodic health and welfare checks.**
- **Conducted two Senior Citizens Police Academies consisting of 10 three-hour sessions and graduating 39 seniors.**
- **Made 124 visits to various Project Lifesaver clients to change batteries, re-attach trackers and check transmitter frequencies to ensure a strong signal.**
- **Signed up 61 new Project Lifesaver clients.**
- **Made 15 calls to seniors for Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia's Meals on Wheels Program.**
- **Was awarded the Mayor's Commission on Aging's 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award for his work with seniors.**
- **Raised over \$9,000 in donations for Project Lifesaver.**

- Was a guest speaker at the Office of the Attorney General’s TRIAD Conference.
- Taught CPR/Standard First Aid for VBSO indoctrination classes and deputies requiring recertification and assisted with the OC spray portion of indoc.
- Participated in the Mayflower Marathon Food Drive for the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore.
- **Participated in 22 Child I.D. events, providing over 700 free I.D. cards to parents.**
- **Participated in Hooked On Fishing Not on Drugs and the Red, White & Blue Youth Fishing Experience, providing the opportunity for over 300 children to go fishing.**
- **Held Shred Day at Marian Manor Assisted Living, shredding 3,000 pounds of material and collecting \$420 in monetary donations and over 500 pounds of food for the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore.**
- Participated in the VBSO Senior Safety Seminar, providing self-defense tactics and safety information to seniors.
- Delivered donated Jazzy mobile chairs to a disabled veteran and seniors in need at the Sullivan House independent living community.



VBSO volunteers, including Community Engagement Capt. Karen “K.J.” Johnson (left) and Community Outreach Coordinator Gary Zalas (center right), at Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs.

Division Updates

Correctional Operations

Corrections forms the core of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office. It is made up of:

- **Correctional Operations**, which includes the watch teams and Emergency Response Team (ERT);
- **Correctional Administration**, which includes Medical, Power Shift and Compliance;
- **Correctional Support**, which includes Intake and Release, Records, Property, and the Reentry and Weekender programs;
- **Classification and the Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU)**, which includes Inmate Programs, the K9 Unit and the Workforce; and
- **Inmate Services**, which include the Canteen, Inmate Kitchen and Staff Kitchen.

Emergency Response Team

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is an elite group of deputies who receive specialized training to respond to emergencies and high-risk situations, such as prisoner disturbances, inmate escapes, and barricade and hostage situations. They also assist with high-profile court cases, warrant sweeps, erroneous releases and prisoner transports.

This year the team successfully completed specialized training in the following areas: Tactical Firearms, Rifle, Sage, Noise Device, Mission Launcher, Crowd Management, Advanced Defensive Tactics with Cell Extractions, Advanced Combat Medic, Taser Operator Course, and Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE). In addition, ERT



The VBSO Emergency Response Team (ERT) teaching the Citizen Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training at Regent University.

members attend the Mock Prison Riot in West Virginia, where they received additional training and obtained certified instructorships. The team conducted group workouts to stay in shape and maintain a LawFit gold status.

The ERT worked extensively with other Hampton Roads public safety agencies this year. The ERT partnered with the VBPD mobile tactics team for operations at the Oceanfront in the event of a civil disturbance and upstaffed the Correctional Center in the event of a mass arrest. It provided support for the Something in the Water festival, Beach It! festival and Audacy Oceanfront Concerts. The team also provided much-needed support for the Independence Day holiday. Additionally, the ERT assisted Chesapeake law enforcement agencies during a political rally for former president and presidential nominee Donald Trump. **The team provided security at the entrance to the rally, which drew over 10,000 people.**

The ERT also continued to team up with local churches and organizations within the community to provide and educate them on Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE). In addition, the ERT, at the request of Sheriff Holcomb, began providing Senior Safety Seminars, during which several team members with backgrounds in control tactics and self-defense shared information on situational awareness, threat recognition, communication, and distance management. The VBSO offered the training in response to the rising number of crimes being perpetrated against senior citizens.

Lastly, this year the ERT conducted an ERT School in May 2024, adding several new members to the team. **The ERT currently has 25 members.** The ERT plans to incorporate more specialized training in the upcoming fiscal year and will be conducting another ERT School in the hopes of gaining more members.



The ERT teaching a Senior Safety Seminar at the Creeds Senior Resource Center.

Medical Division

As part of Correctional Administration, the Medical Division of the VBSO is responsible for overseeing the medical and mental health treatment of inmates incarcerated in the Virginia Beach Correctional Center. The division works in concert with the jail's medical provider, VitalCore Health Strategies, which took over the jail's medical contract from Advanced Correctional Healthcare Inc. in September 2023. Under its contract, VitalCore is responsible for providing medication, sick calls, chronic care, emergency care, off-site care

coordination, dental, pharmacy, laboratory, dialysis and other ancillary services for the jail's 1,000 inmates.

This year (from Sept. 28, 2023-June 30, 2024), the Medical Division completed:

- **8,363 nurse sick calls;**
- **3,062 physician sick calls;**
- **1,785 chronic care visits; and**
- **571 obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN) appointments.**

In addition, in that time Medical oversaw 1,496 inmates placed on detoxification protocol for substance abuse issues and 3,344 inmates placed on suicide watch.



Inmate Services Director Steve Wilke with WAVY TV 10 reporter Amy Avery doing a story about the jail's food handler training program for inmates.

Inmate Kitchen

As part of Inmate Services, the Inmate Kitchen prepares and serves all inmate meals per state nutritional requirements and Virginia Department of Health standards. Inmates receive two hot meals and one bagged meal every day. **This year, the Inmate Kitchen served an average of 2,701 regular meals and 450 special diet meals per day, totaling 1.2 million meals this year.**

Criminal Intelligence Unit

The Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office investigates and prosecutes any criminal misconduct or rule violation committed by people incarcerated in the Virginia Beach Correctional Center. The work of the CIU is vital to the safety and security of the jail, for inmates and staff.

This year, the CIU investigated 177 inmate-on-inmate assaults, 16 inmate-on-staff assaults and 979 institutional incidents resulting in board hearings. The unit identified 583 certified gang members, 68 suspected gang members and 236 active gang members inside the Correctional Center. The team made 19 arrests.

The CIU assisted local law enforcement with the following cases this year:

- July 2023 – Assisted VBPD detectives with the identification of a grand larceny subject.

- August 2023 – Provided information from a confidential informant to VBPD detectives on a cold-case homicide.
- August 2023 – Provided intel to the Norfolk Sheriff’s Office (NSO) regarding a former inmate having a hit put on him by Bounty Hunter Watts gang members in the Norfolk City Jail.
- August 2023 – Worked with Virginia Beach Fire Department Investigator M. Karlov on a Virginia Beach Courthouse bomb threat investigation (warrants obtained).
- August 2023 – Assisted the VBPD with a human trafficking investigation.
- August 2023 – Alerted the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) to an inmate having a cellphone while incarcerated at Sussex 1 State Prison.
- October 2023 – Assisted the VBPD with the identification of Brandon Foster and Tyler Davis, who were involved in the attempted capital murder of a VBPD officer during a shoplifting incident at Kohl’s.
- January 2024 – Assisted the NSO with investigating one of its nurses.
- February 2024 – Assisted the VBPD with investigating a suspect who committed a stabbing at a Ruby Tuesday on Halloween.
- February to March 2024 – Assisted the VBPD with investigating the highly publicized Peele Court shooting, where 8-year-old Landyn Davis was struck in the head by a stray bullet. With the assistance of the CIU and the unit’s knowledge of local key gang members, the VBPD was able to arrest the four individuals involved in the shooting and pursue criminal charges, including aggravated malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony and malicious shooting into an occupied dwelling (24 counts).
- March 2024 – Alerted the VADOC gang specialist to an inmate having a cellphone with incarcerated at Sussex 1 State Prison.
- April 2024 – Assisted VBPD detectives with identifying the suspects involved in a shooting at the Oceanfront on 24th Street.

The CIU also assisted with the following state and federal investigations:

- September 2023 – Provided the FBI with intel on gang activity in the Third Precinct of Virginia Beach.

- October 2023 – Assisted the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) with obtaining IP addresses for an investigation.
- October 2023 – Assisted Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) with providing security for subjects in a human trafficking court case.
- October 2023 – Assisted HSI with obtaining a federal indictment against an inmate in a child exploitation case.
- April 2024 – Assisted the Pittsburgh Police Department with a stolen firearm case.

The CIU is currently assisting in a number of active cases with the VADOC, HSI and other law enforcement agencies.

The CIU investigates any Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) allegations involving inmate-on-inmate assaults within the VBCC, totaling 110 cases this year. Of those cases, 27 were unfounded, 29 were unsubstantiated, four were substantiated and 29 were not PREA-related. The unit conducted five Sexual Abuse Incident Review Boards and worked with 21 other agencies when investigating PREA allegations.

K9 Unit

The CIU includes the K9 Unit, which was formed in 2013 and consists of three deputies and three canines. It has two narcotics K9s: K9 Pablo, a 3-year-old Belgian Malinois, and K9 Apollo, a 3-year-old Belgian Malinois and Hampton Roads’ first fentanyl-detecting K9. It also has one explosive K9, K9 Gaston, an 8-year-old German shepherd.



Master Deputy II A. Natalzia with K9 Candy during her final walkout at the VBSO.

The VBSO this year said farewell to its first ever K9, K9 Candy, who retired on Oct. 23, 2023, after 10 years of service and over 2,900 operational searches. The 13-year-old German Shepherd passed away after a brief battle with cancer. The loss was felt deeply by her handler, Master Deputy II A. Natalzia, and the entire VBSO family.

This year the K9 Unit conducted 187 operational searches: 41 by K9 Gaston and Sgt. A. Whitehead, 110 by K9 Pablo and Master Deputy II A. Natalzia, and 36 by K9 Apollo and Master Deputy II C. Repass. As a result, the unit secured six felony drug convictions, including against inmates found with narcotics in their possession.

During this time frame, the K9 Unit also performed four Weekender Program screenings that resulted in seven weekenders being reclassified to straight time due to a K9 alert and failed drug test.

The VBSO K9 Unit worked in conjunction with the VBPD, Portsmouth Police Department and Old Dominion University K9 Unit and assisted in the following:

- An HSI operation that resulted in the seizure of narcotics, a firearm and thousands of dollars.
- Several Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) operations, include screening Norfolk International Airport, a United Parcel Service (UPS) Facility, a FedEx facility and a U.S. Postal Service facility.
- Camp Pendleton courier screenings of the new cadets for the Commonwealth ChalleNGe Youth Academy.

The unit's newest additions, K9 Apollo and Master Deputy II Repass, were trained in-house by Sgt. Whitehead and Master Deputy II Natalzia. **Their training lasted from June 30, 2023-Jan. 23, 2024, and consisted of hundreds of hours of training in detection of vehicles, building interiors and exteriors, luggage/parcels and couriers (people).** K9 Apollo and Master Deputy II Repass received their certification from a Master Trainer with the Virginia Police Work Dog Association (VPWDA). They are certified to detect marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and ecstasy. K9 Apollo is also the first K9 in Hampton Roads to be trained in the detection of fentanyl. Master Deputy II Repass is the VBSO's first women K9 handler.



Master Deputy II C. Repass with K9 Apollo

Court Security, Transportation & Civil Process

The Courts Division of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office — which includes Court Security, Civil Process and Transportation — is statutorily charged under Virginia code section §53.1-120 with ensuring that the Virginia Beach Courthouse and courtrooms are secure from violence and disruptions. The VBSO provides personal protection for the judges in the Virginia Beach Circuit, General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relations District court parking areas. It has also undertaken additional security enhancements over the last few years, including gated fencing and an upgraded camera system.

The Sheriff's Office has continued to deploy highly trained and motivated deputies utilizing technology, such as the Polycom Telecommunications System and iPads, to hold virtual court hearings. This decreases the number of inmates who need to be transported to and from other courts and jurisdictions, which reduces risk and improves safety. **Courts works with Virginia Beach Community Corrections and Pretrial to safely arrest clients with outstanding warrants, resulting in 90 arrests this year.**

Civil Process also has a significant impact on the community, serving over 100,600 documents this year. This included 3,310 evictions – nearly twice as many as last fiscal year – and 4,399 72-hour notices to vacate.

Training



The VBSO's Department of Criminal Justice Services Firearms Instructor School

The VBSO Training Division is responsible for staff training, including initial and continuing in-service training. The division meets all state-mandated requirements set by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. **This year, Training conducted more than 6,200 hours of training, including three Basic Academy Classes totaling 46 graduates.** This training enhanced deputy readiness in their current fields and prepared them for future promotions. Courses – including some offered for the first time – included a General Instructor Course, Defensive Tactics Instructor Course, Firearms

Instructor School, Red Dot Sight (RDS) Pistol Training, Introduction to Leadership Foundations and Sergeant Candidate School, in addition to AXON courses on body-worn cameras (BWCs) and Tasers. The AXON training was a significant undertaking following the issuance of BWCs to all of the VBSO's deputy sheriffs in 2023. **The Training Division spearheaded that effort, successfully training 400 personnel in the use of both BWCs and Tasers.**

Additionally, this year 20 students graduated from the Sergeant Candidate School, six from the Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) program, six from the Leadership Foundations class and 15 from the 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, bringing the VBSO's total number of 40-hour CIT graduates to 131 deputies (one third of its total sworn deputy sheriffs). The division also transitioned from teaching the

American Red Cross Heartsaver CPR AED course to the Basic Life Support (BLS) course, which provides more comprehensive lifesaving skills.

Three VBSO deputies are attending the VBPD Option 6 Academy this year and are scheduled to graduate in the fall of 2024. This school provides additional law enforcement training, strengthens the relationship between the VBSO and VBPD, and ensures that the VBSO continues to set a high standard of performance for its deputy sheriffs.

Training is a core tenant of the VBSO and is one of Sheriff Holcomb's leadership values: T.R.U.S.T. – transparency, respect, unity, service and training. Training is critical to preparing deputy sheriffs for success in their careers.

The 17-week VBSO Basic Academy curriculum is strategically designed to provide deputy sheriff recruits with the training and tools needed to reach their full potential and become the best possible law enforcement officers. Initial Basic Academy training develops the minds, career goals and attitudes of future deputy sheriffs who, as law enforcement officers, will ensure social order. The needs and demands of modern-day society are constantly evolving, and the VBSO's training



The VBSO's 56th Basic Academy Class

curriculum is constantly updated to meet those demands, align with societal expectations of its law enforcement officers and keep up with current best practices in the profession.

Deputies require training in a variety of fields and disciplines. They must be comprehensively trained in local, state and federal law, evidence handling, prisoner transport, handcuffing, defensive tactics, firearms, driving, community relations, cultural diversity, ethics and many other areas of law enforcement.

Law enforcement careers are inherently dangerous, and nationwide 147 law enforcement officers paid the ultimate price in 2023. Training is essential to keeping deputies safe and helping them go home at the end of each shift. In addition, the actions of law enforcement officers are constantly scrutinized, which brings scrutiny on their training. For that reason, Basic Academy instructors have an awesome responsibility and bear a great deal of liability for the performance of their students.

From the first day of the Basic Academy, training officers help set the tone for a new deputy's entire career. They instill discipline, uphold ethical principles, and pass on knowledge and skills that are vital to safeguarding people's rights, preserving the peace and public trust, and getting the deputy home in one piece at the end of each shift. Law enforcement training officers have one of the most rewarding — and most important — jobs in their respective agencies.

The Basic Academy provides realistic and up-to-date training courses to its deputy recruits. The VBSO has established a diverse training curriculum taught by instructors with extensive experience. Basic Academy instructors are carefully vetted to ensure they have subject matter expertise, are dynamic presenters and are passionate about their course material. The VBSO has an unparalleled commitment to ensure that all deputies attending the Basic Academy graduate with the skills and knowledge to succeed.

The VBSO Basic Academy instills the following qualities in every deputy sheriff:

- HUMANITY – We respect life and liberty. We are sensitive and inclusive, treating everyone with dignity and compassion.
- INTEGRITY – We are guided by the principles of justice. We employ the highest ethical standard and we demand accountability, consistency, fairness and honesty in the performance of our duties.
- PROFESSIONALISM – We take pride in our department. We are committed to excellence in our profession, and we maintain the highest standard of education in our field.
- COURAGE – We have mental and moral strength to resist opposition and maintain fairness of mind. We always stand by our fellow officers in the face of danger or extreme difficulty.

Professional Standards

The VBSO Professional Standards Office (PSO) is responsible for investigating all serious incidents — including all in-custody deaths and uses of force — as well as potential policy violations, misconduct allegations, and internal and external complaints against the Sheriff's Office and its appointees. It includes the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, Accreditation and Emergency Planning, and Legal Affairs.

Accreditation and Emergency Planning

The VBSO is accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) and is a member of the associated Virginia Law Enforcement Accreditation Coalition (VALEAC). Accreditation assessment occurs every four years to

ensure the VBSO's policies and procedures adhere to state accreditation standards and the Code of Virginia. Accreditation enhances the community's understanding of the Sheriff's Office, its goals and objectives and demonstrates the professionalism of the department.

The VBSO accreditation program is in year three of the four-year accreditation cycle. A mock assessment of the accreditation files from years one through three is planned for the fall of 2024. During the mock assessment, VALEAC assessors will determine compliance to-date with the accreditation standards. This will prepare the VBSO for its on-site accreditation audit/inspection, which will occur in the fall of 2025.



Deputies conducting a jail-wide search for contraband.

The Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) has established minimum standards for the construction, equipment, administration and operation of local jails. **There are 128 minimum standards which cover administration and management of incarcerated individuals, programs and health services offered, jail operations, and sanitation and safety.** The DOC conducts annual unannounced inspections on all standards that cover the wellbeing of incarcerated individuals, which includes life, health and safety. A major audit of all standards is conducted every three years.

This year the VBSO shifted the handling of DOC standards to a DOC Compliance Manager rather than dividing the files between divisions and supervisors. This keeps consistency in the presentation of files during DOC audits.

The VBSO is in year two of the three-year DOC audit cycle. **In December 2023, the DOC conducted an unannounced inspection of the Virginia Beach Correctional Center, electronically reviewing 43 standards and giving the VBSO a passing score.** Prior to this inspection, the VBSO converted all DOC inspection files from paper to electronic files maintained by its DOC Compliance Manager. Each electronic file contains the DOC standard description and requirements, VBSO policy for the standard, and any documentation that is required to show that the VBSO is complying with policy and practice.

This year, PSO and Accreditation undertook the substantial task of updating the VBSO's policy and procedures manual. This included developing new policies, reviewing every existing policy, and transitioning from former Sheriff Stolle to Sheriff Holcomb.

Accreditation will be transitioning to the PowerDMS accreditation program during the next year. Beginning in the fall of 2025, all future accreditation file assessments will be held virtually through the PowerDMS program.

The VBSO recognizes the importance of preparing for severe weather events, natural disasters and mass casualty events. It prepares for these incidents by regularly reviewing its emergency plans and conducting exercises to ensure operational readiness when an emergency occurs. PSO staff also regularly attends the City of Virginia Beach Emergency Management meetings. These meetings touch on a variety of emergency operations and include revisiting and revising emergency operation plans, recovery plans and shelter plans to ensure they are updated and accurate and the City is ready to handle any emergency it may face.

Legal

PSO is also responsible for responding to requests for information from citizens, attorneys and agencies throughout the state. These requests come in in many ways, including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, subpoenas and general requests for information. Requests are made for a wide variety of public records, including body-worn camera (BWC) video, facility video, inmate Telmate tablet messages, inmate records, medical records, and VBSO policy and procedures. Virginia law requires that FOIA requests be answered within five business days. PSO staff works closely with the City Attorney's Office to review each request to determine what information should be released. There are many circumstances where the information requested must be withheld, such as to comply with medical privacy laws, or can voluntarily be withheld, such as to protect an ongoing investigation, based on exemptions provided in state code, with concurrence by the City Attorney's Office.

This fiscal year, the PSO answered 112 requests for information, consisting of:



Body-worn cameras

- **62 FOIA requests**
- **21 subpoenas**
- **29 general requests for information**

In 2023, the VBSO issued body-worn cameras (BWCs) to all sworn staff. Adding this valuable tool to the workforce came with requests for the release of BWC footage. **The PSO processed 22 requests for the release of BWC video this year.** PSO staff in partnership with the City Attorney's Office carefully reviewed

each request and the associated video(s) for all necessary redactions. This work can take a great deal of additional time to make sure all required information is redacted prior to the video being released. Requests for BWC video have varied widely and have included Civil Process deputies executing evictions, Court deputies responding to calls throughout the Courthouse and adjacent parking lots, and incidents within the Correctional Center.

The PSO is also responsible for tracking civil litigation cases against VBSO staff. PSO tracked 14 cases this year, with only three remaining open as of June 30, 2024.

Legal Counsel

The VBSO Office of Legal Counsel provides overall legal advice and guidance on a variety of topics to the Sheriff's Office. It is led by Legal Counsel G. Timothy Oksman, a Vietnam veteran with substantial experience in state and local government, with assistance from members of the command and support staffs.



VBSO Legal Counsel G. Timothy Oksman

During this reporting period, the Office of Legal Counsel engaged in the following activities:

- Reviewed numerous federal and state court decisions that could affect the VBSO and briefed command staff, when appropriate.
- By invitation, conducted a Use of Force training course for the Hampton Sheriff's Office, the Suffolk Sheriff's Office and command staff of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office.
- Provided legal advice about various operational issues, including eviction procedures, response to political demonstrations, searches, collection of inmate fees, "photo enforcement" of speeding tickets, giving legal advice and assistance to inmates, disposal of outdated firearms, and transporting inmates.
- Reviewed, revised and negotiated various contracts and programs, including those with Hunt Club Farm, City government (mental health services), employee assistance related to drug and alcohol use, disposition of surplus military equipment, a music program for inmates, the access agreement with a production company filming a TV series in VBSO Intake, insurance coverage for a major concert, an art therapy program for inmates, a private contractor to handle extra duty employment, and a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Chesapeake Sheriff's Office.
- **Reviewed and commented on over 30 VBSO policies and practices on various subjects.**

- Assisted in dealing with several “sovereign citizens” and attorneys representing inmates.
- Responded to several high-profile FOIA requests.
- Advised on several personnel and disciplinary matters.
- Worked with and provided advice to the Virginia Sheriffs’ Association on a variety of topics, including reforming the Joint Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission, and legislation during the 2024 session of the Virginia General Assembly.
- Reviewed various claims and potential claims against the office, referring them to the State Division of Risk Management, when appropriate, and assisted Risk Management with the defense of pending litigation.
- Negotiated with several federal agencies about different matters involving the VBSO.
- Helped coordinate review of select law enforcement policies by the Virginia Beach Commonwealth Attorney’s Office.

Maintenance



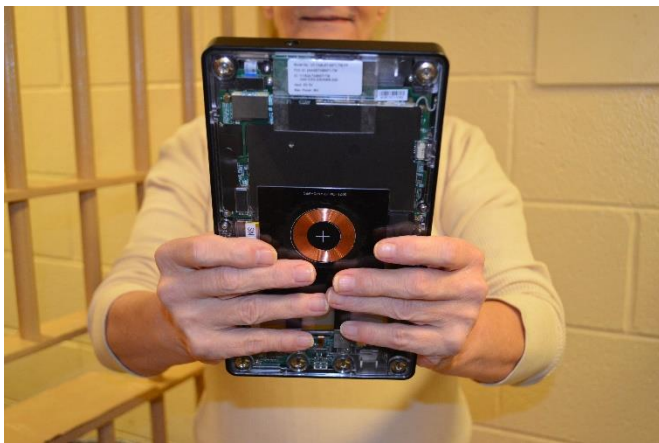
Deputy II Heather Rosales standing in front of a mural she painted as part of the Virginia Beach Correctional Center beautification efforts.

The Maintenance Division is staffed by one sergeant, one civilian supervisor, one civilian and nine deputies and is supervised by the Sheriff’s Aide Capt. Lois Thompson. The Maintenance Division is responsible for all the maintenance and mechanical functions of the Correctional Center and Law Enforcement Training Academy. **The division completes work orders 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, totaling more than 7,900 work orders this year.**

This year, the Maintenance Division completed the following projects

within the Correctional Center:

- Modified and converted a shed for the K9 Unit, installing heating and air conditioning.
- Escorted a contractor to install new doors and locks in medical isolation.
- **Completed a full renovation of medical isolation to include painting and installing eight televisions.**
- Upgraded firmware and encryption for all VBSO radios.
- Painted the Administration offices, conference room and lobby, and created a new office space.
- Renovated a mop closet, converting it into a mail room.
- Escorted contractors for the elevator overhaul in all three Correctional Center buildings.
- Escorted a contractor installing data lines for the body camera and Taser docking stations.
- Assisted the City with repairing a water pipe in the Staff Kitchen dining area.
- Assisted and escorted City contractors with replacement of an emergency generator.
- Completed painting common areas of the Correctional Center.
- **Upgraded 92 Spartan devices to enhance deputies' ability to track inmates in real time.**



An inmate holding a tablet

- **Escorted and assisted contractors with replacing 322 inmate tablets and docking stations.**

Ongoing projects include:

- Camera replacement.
- Refurbishing cell blocks and showers throughout the Correctional Center.

- Replacing lightbulbs inside of the Correctional Center with LED bulbs to reduce energy consumption.
- Power washing and vent cleaning of Correctional Center living spaces and public areas.
- Renovating Inmate Kitchen drain lines, floors and walls.

Information Technology

While the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office utilizes City of Virginia Beach Information Technology (IT) for the care and maintenance of its technology, it also employs two full-time staff members to assist with its daily operations and ongoing projects due to high security demands and departmental requirements.

This year, the IT department has completed the following projects:

- **Laserfiche users: Audited all staff with full Laserfiche licenses and verified need, resulting in the removal of 22 full licenses at a significant cost savings.**
- Phone option directory: Audited the current phone option directory to make all option choices current and up-to-date. Submitted findings to City IT for all required setting options.
- OpenFox/Java update: Worked with a systems analyst to update all Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN) machines with the latest Java update (required due to OpenFox no longer being accessible).
- Edovo: Worked with vendor to add the Edovo education app to the inmate Telmate tablets.
- Offender Management System (OMS) upgrade: Worked with a systems analyst to test and implement the OMS upgrade.
- Heartland/Aperia annual compliance review.
- Virginia State Police VCIN network audit.

Ongoing projects include:

- Managing IT asset inventories, including computer machines, associated hardware, mobile devices and tablets.

- Managing computer and monitor upgrades throughout Buildings 7, 8, 10 and the Law Enforcement Training Academy.
- Managing printer replacement for the VCIN machines.
- Transition Works Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag replacement and RFID reader system repair.



The LiveScan machine located in the VBCC Intake Lobby

- Mobile Device Management startup.
- Intake LiveScan machine repair coordination.
- Troubleshooting ServiceNow tickets, as provided.
- Continuing to implement new inmate forms on the Telmate tablets to reduce paper forms.
- Providing a mail scanning solution to prevent contraband from entering the Correctional Center.
- Upgrading VBSO Wi-Fi and auditing network closets to remove outdated technology.
- Upgrading the current fax server used for Records.
- Assisting with implementation of Axon software solutions, including body-worn cameras, Tasers, docking stations and records standards management.
- Assisting with replacement of Care Mart.
- Assisting with replacement of the Civility program for Civil Process.
- Assisting Training with new software.
- Conducting audits of software access right to improve security.

Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Division is unwavering in its commitment to upholding the mission and operating standards set by the Sheriff. Its role is to oversee the administration of policies, personnel records, recruitment, retention and overall staff support, all of which contribute to a highly trained, diverse workforce. In this pursuit, HR must adhere to the rules and regulations that govern public



Members of VBSO Human Resources, including Director Deborah Sibbering (center).

employment. **The division is led by Chief Deputy of Administration Alvie Culanding, who manages 173 appointees supervised by captains, lieutenants, sergeants and other supervisors, both uniformed (sworn) and non-uniformed (civilian). HR is a team of 11 appointees with decades of experience within the Sheriff's Office, including Director of Human Resources Deborah Sibbering, who joined the VBSO this year.** The division also serves as a valuable resource for deputies and civilians who are approaching retirement, providing support and guidance during their transition.

The Human Resources Division is dedicated to vigorous recruitment and career development. **This year it interviewed approximately 145 applicants for deputy sheriff and 106 applicants for full- and part-time civilian positions. As a result, the VBSO tested 123 candidates for deputy, with 107 passing and advancing in the hiring process, which includes a physical and psychological evaluation before moving on to the VBSO Basic Academy.** HR actively partners with local organizations and military branches through the DOD SkillBridge Program to maximize recruitment efforts and work toward filling all vacant positions. This collaboration fosters engagement with the local community and promotes the VBSO as an attractive career option. The VBSO also provides a cash incentive for employees who refer prospective applicants, a valuable tool for attracting local talent. The division constantly explores new methods of expanding and enhancing the recruitment program to ensure the VBSO remains a viable competitor in a challenging law enforcement recruitment market.

The national turnover rate in law enforcement ranges from 14% to 20%, while the turnover rate at the VBSO is approximately 12.5%. Sheriff Holcomb is committed to supporting the Human Resources Division in reducing vacancies and strategically reinforcing that the VBSO remains a local employer of choice.

The VBSO is proud of the various career options available within the department. Its commitment to reducing turnover and promoting internal career growth is evident in the multitude of career opportunities available to appointees, which helps with promoting and retaining talent. **Over the past year, 68 uniformed appointees progressed in title and pay range, and there were an additional 36 internal promotions.** This is a significant accomplishment as the VBSO strives to maintain momentum despite losing appointees due to retirement and other attrition factors.

In addition to providing a supportive environment for appointees and retirees, the Human Resources Division supports and maintains clearances for civilian visitors who conduct business at the Sheriff's Office. **This year, HR conducted 192 background checks for returning visitors. In addition, the division screened and vetted 123 new medical personnel, contractors and volunteers requiring authorization to conduct business at the Correctional Center.** This included supporting the transition to a new medical provider.

Finance

The Finance Division of the Sheriff's Office plays a vital role in fiscal sustainability and operational effectiveness. It manages the budget, processes payments and payroll, collects payments for inmate accounts and programs, and handles the procurement process for the Correctional Center, working with the City of Virginia Beach Purchasing Division.



Sheriff Rocky Holcomb addressing Virginia Beach City Council on the VBSO's proposed budget for FY24-25.

In FY24, the VBSO's total budget was \$65.4 million, with \$38.2 million in funding coming from the City, \$21.7 million in funding coming from the state, and the rest supported by local fees and savings.

Additional information about the VBSO budget is available on pages 300-306 of the [City of Virginia Beach Operating Budget](#).

Public Information



VBSO Public Information Officer Toni Guagenti

The Public Information Office handles internal and external communications for the Sheriff's Office, including managing its social media accounts, pitching news stories and responding to media inquiries. The office is staffed by Public Information Officer Toni Guagenti with support from Strategic Communications Consultant Kathy Hieatt.

The PIO staff produce the annual report and regular announcements for the staff. They are involved in all media and communications efforts, including facilitating the filming and production of the "Booked: First Day In" reality television series on A&E. They are active in the VBSO's volunteer efforts, including coordinating the VBSO's quarterly blood drives, helping organize community events such as Sheriff Rocky

Holcomb's Turkey Bowl, and representing the Sheriff's Office on the Board of Directors for Virginia Beach Crime Solvers and the Greater Hampton Roads Crime Lines. **The Public Information Office received and responded to 150 media requests this fiscal year. The PIOs also continued to expand the VBSO's social media presence and following to engage with the public. The VBSO's following has surpassed 8,700 people on Facebook, 5,300 on Twitter and 3,300 on Instagram, in addition to followers on YouTube and LinkedIn.** The PIOs also worked this year with City of Virginia Beach Information Technology to redesign the VBSO website (vbso.net) and make it more accessible for people with disabilities.

The office recognizes the importance of transparency and having a positive working relationship with the news media. Positive news coverage this year included stories published online, in print and on television about the:

- VBSO's second woman to serve as chief deputy
- Red, White and Blue Youth Fishing Experience
- Retirement of former Sheriff Ken Stolle
- Program to prepare inmates for food industry jobs
- Swearing-in of Sheriff Holcomb as the seventh Sheriff of Virginia Beach
- First Filipino chief deputy
- K9 Unit, including the retirement of K9 Candy and certification of K9 Apollo as Hampton Roads' first fentanyl-detecting K9, with the VBSO's first woman handler
- VBSO's donations to the Israel Defense Forces
- Inaugural Turkey Bowl in support of VB Schools' Beach Bags program
- Importance of driving sober, especially during the holiday season

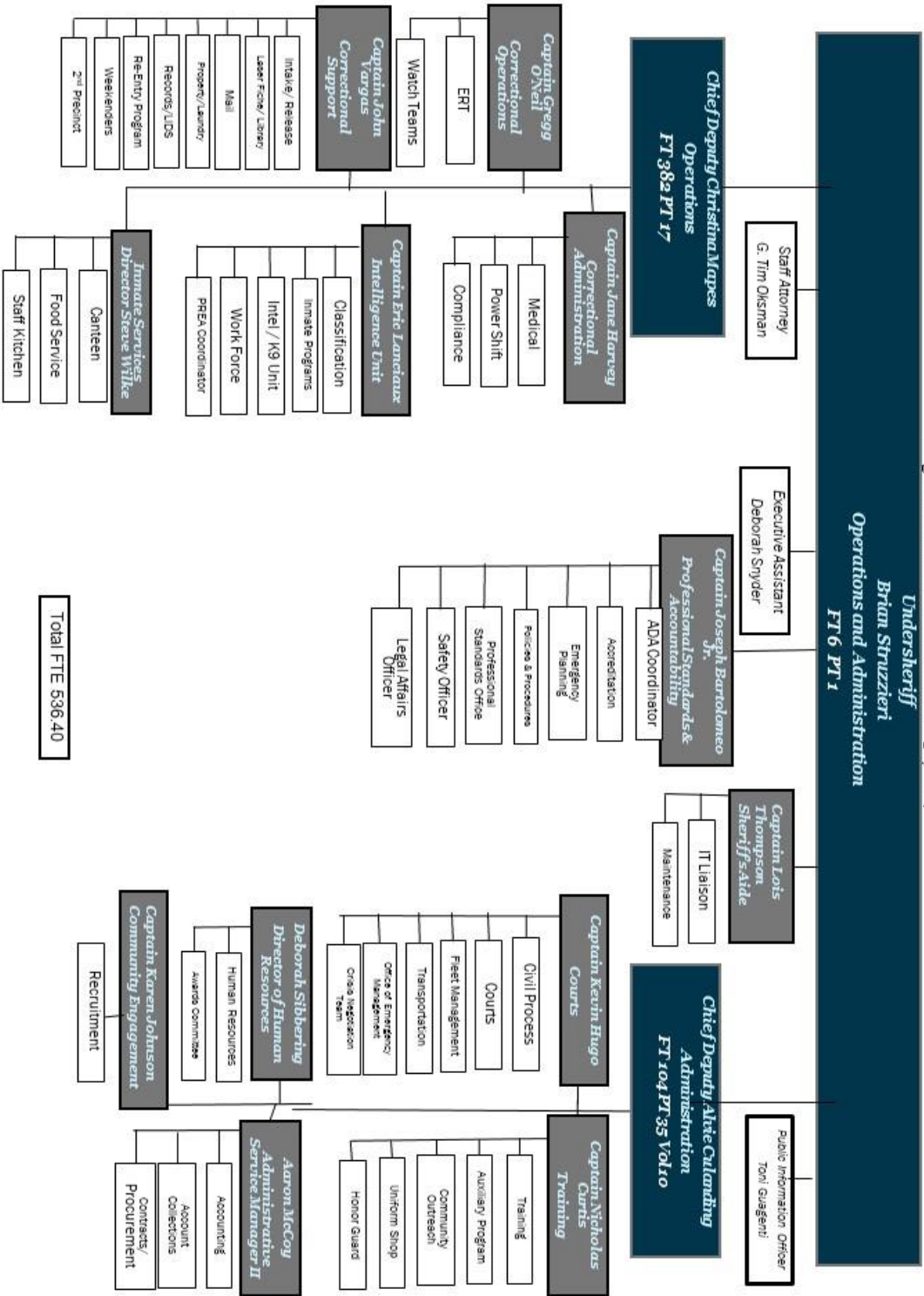
- First deputies to attend the VBPD Academy
- Importance of gun safety, including the VBSO's provision of free ignition locks
- Resurgence of jury duty scams
- American Legion Princess Anne Post 113's Deputy of the Year
- VBSO's new Senior Safety Seminars
- Jail-wide search for contraband
- Easter Eggstravaganza
- Efforts to reinstate the D.A.R.E. program in Virginia Beach schools
- SkillBridge Program for military veterans
- Reentry job fair
- Sounds of BDO concert



The March 2024 jail-wide search

Appendices

Appendix A: Organizational Chart



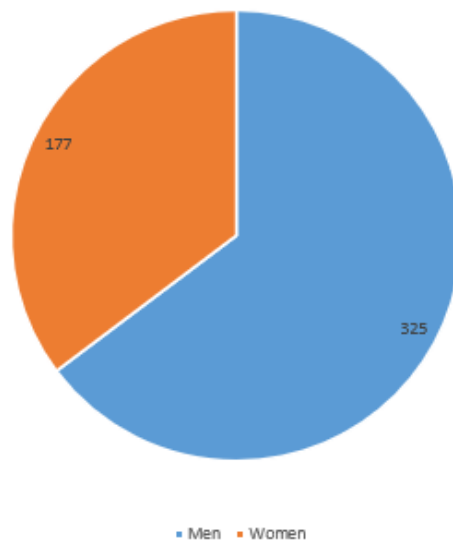
Norman D. Holcomb III
Undersheriff
Brian Struzer
Director of Operations and Administration
FT 6 PT 1
Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office as of June 30, 2024

Appendix B: Agency Statistics

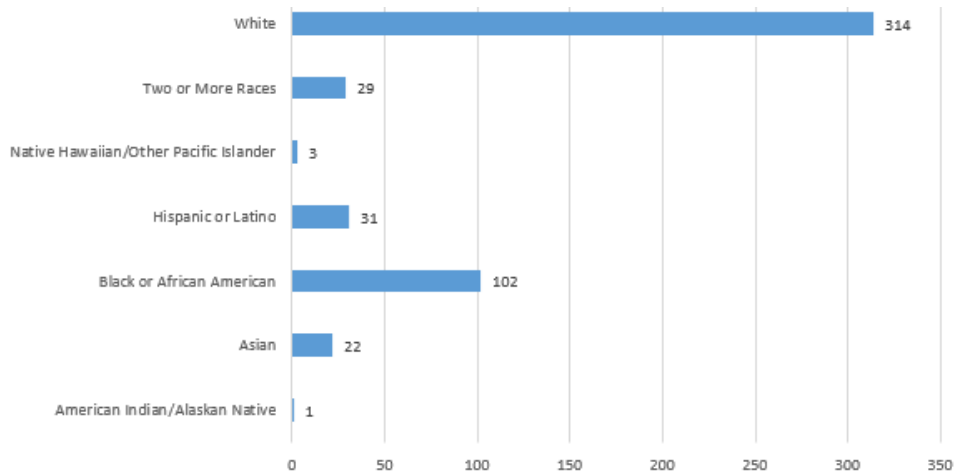
Personnel Demographics

The Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office values diversity and seeks qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds. The office does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class status in the administration of its programs, services and activities.

All Personnel by Gender

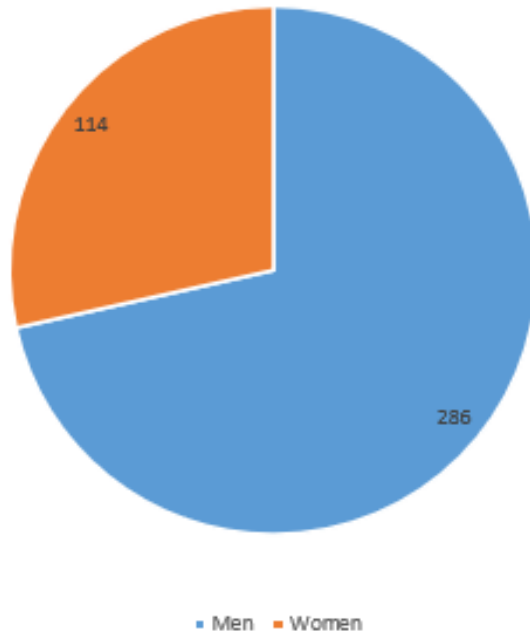


All Personnel by Race

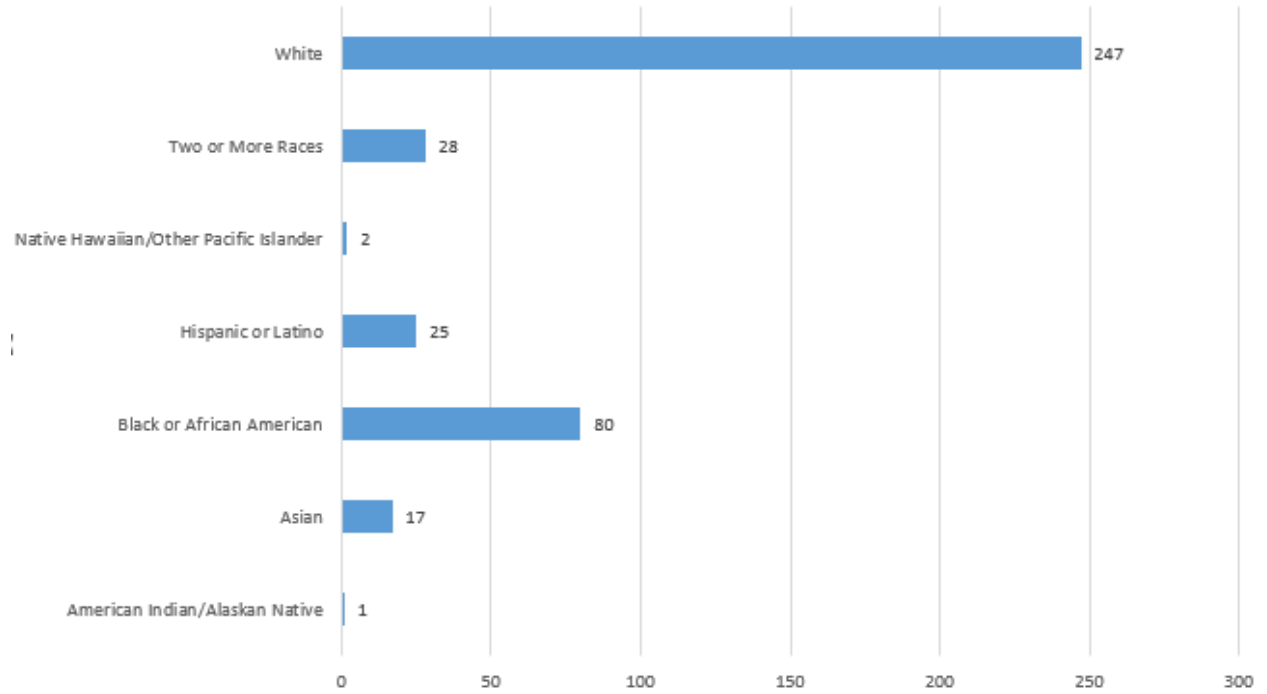


Total Personnel 502

Uniformed Personnel by Gender

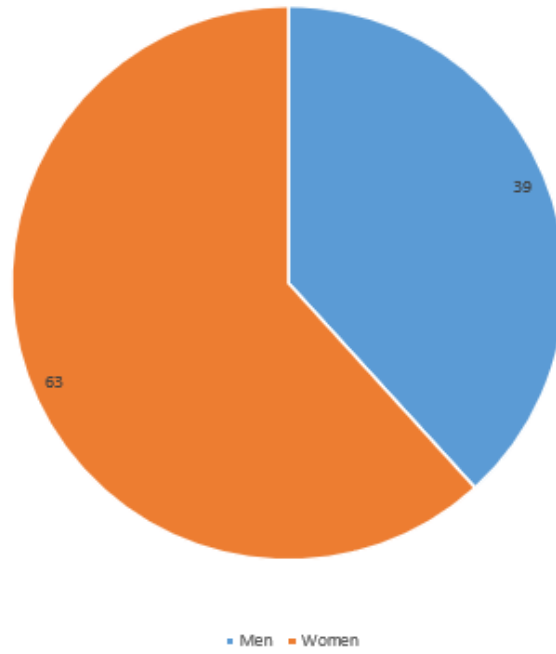


Uniformed Personnel by Race

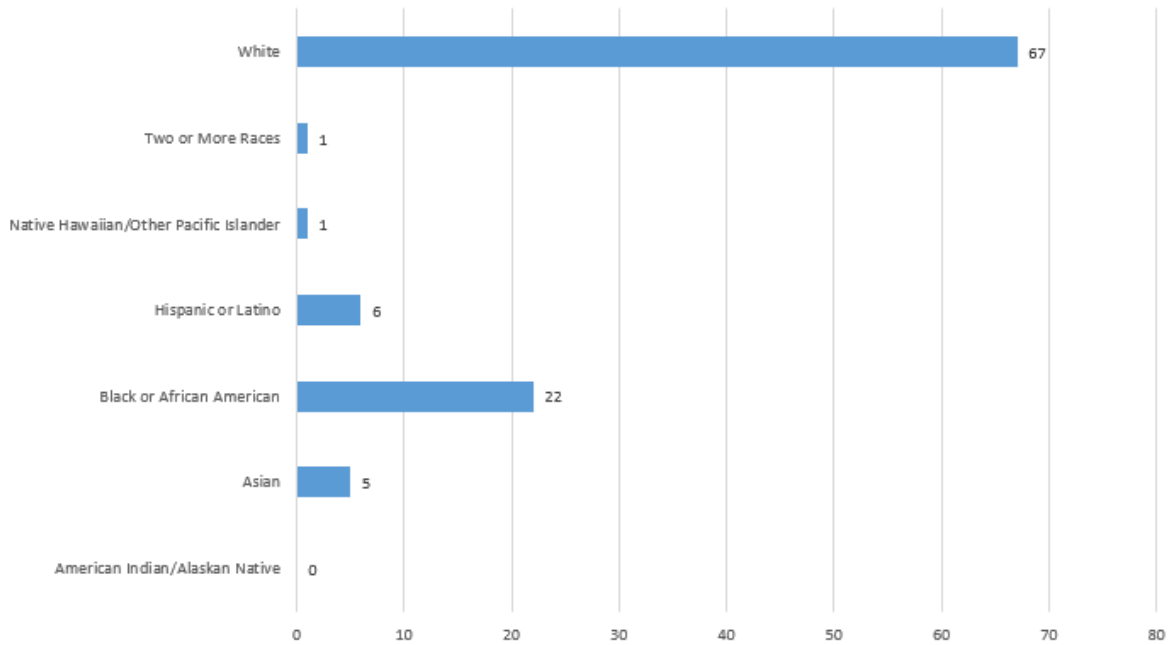


Total Uniformed Personnel 400

Civilian Personnel by Gender



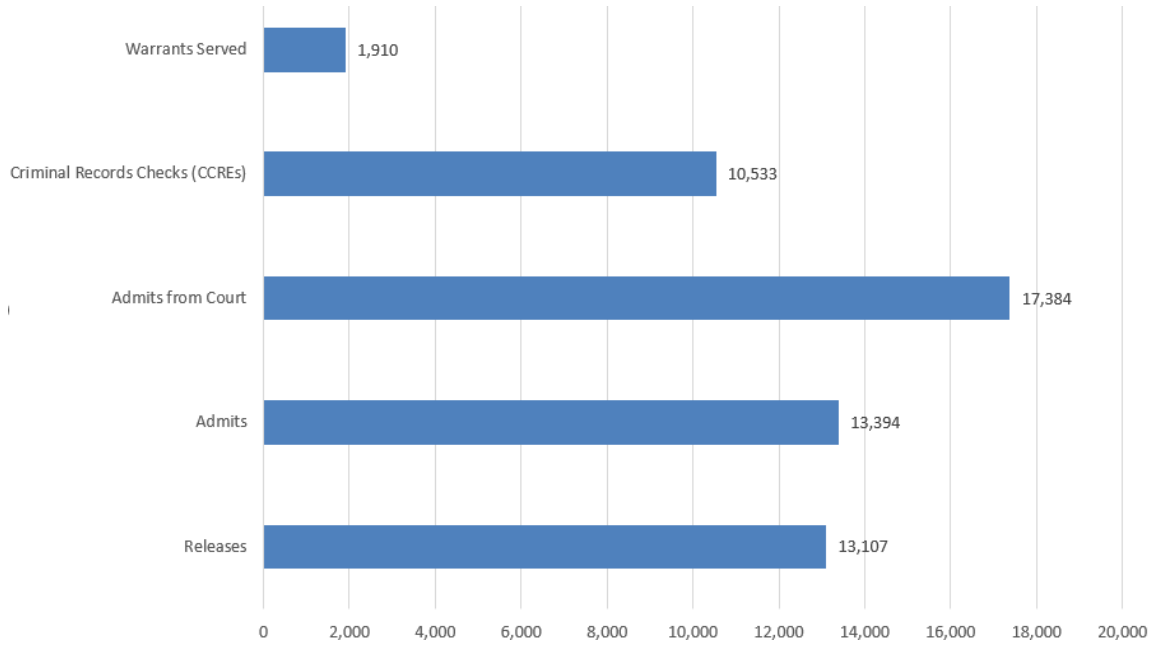
Civilian Personnel by Race



Total Civilian Personnel 102

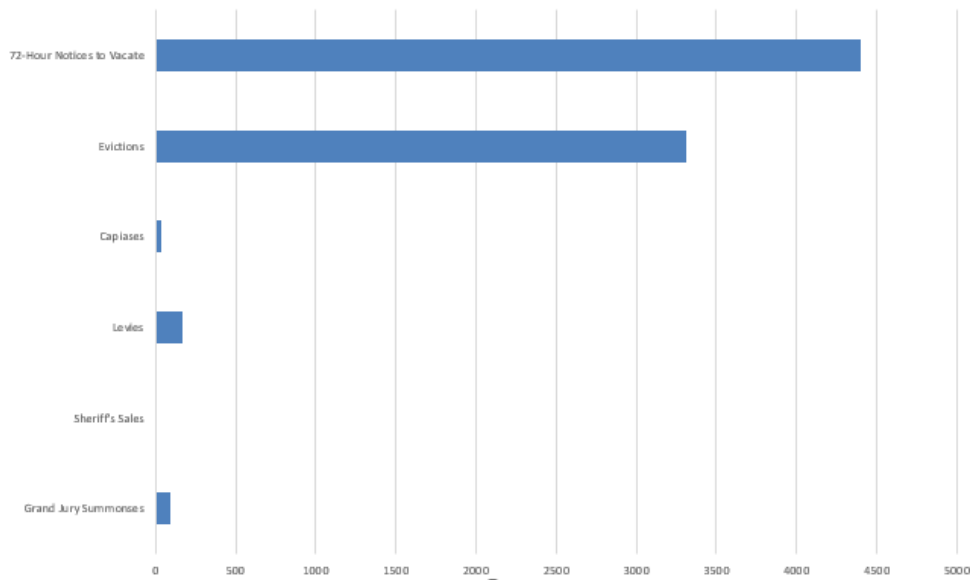
Divisional Statistics

Intake Division



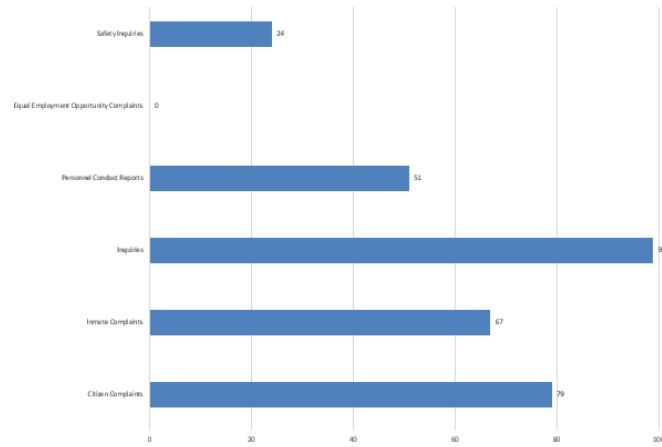
Average Daily Jail Population 996

Civil Process Division

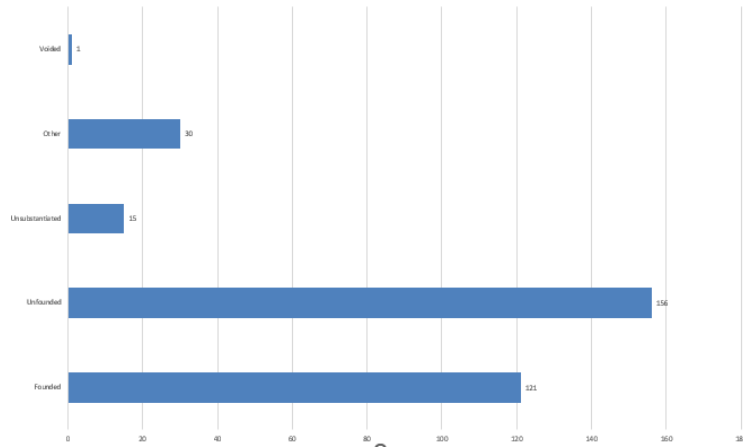


Total Civil Process Documents Served 100,614

Professional Standards Office



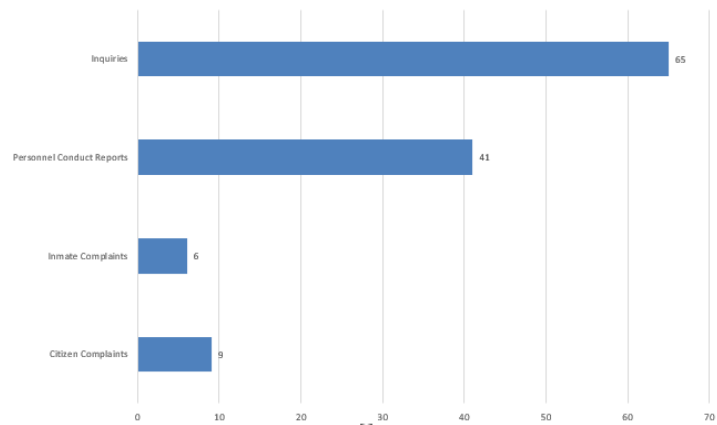
Total Cases 320



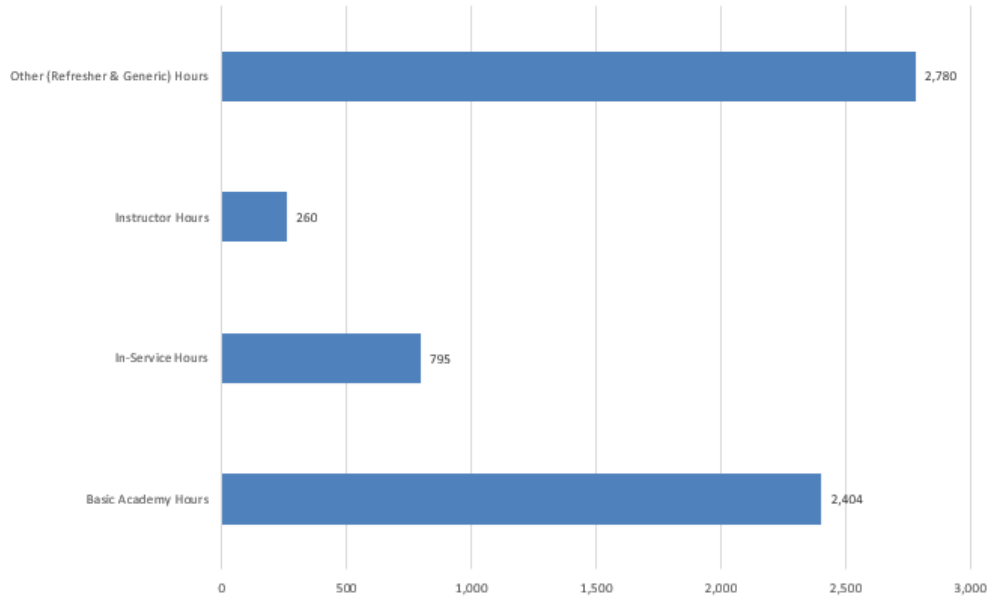
Total Findings 323*

*Some cases may lead to multiple results/infractions, which may create a discrepancy in the overall total.

Founded Cases

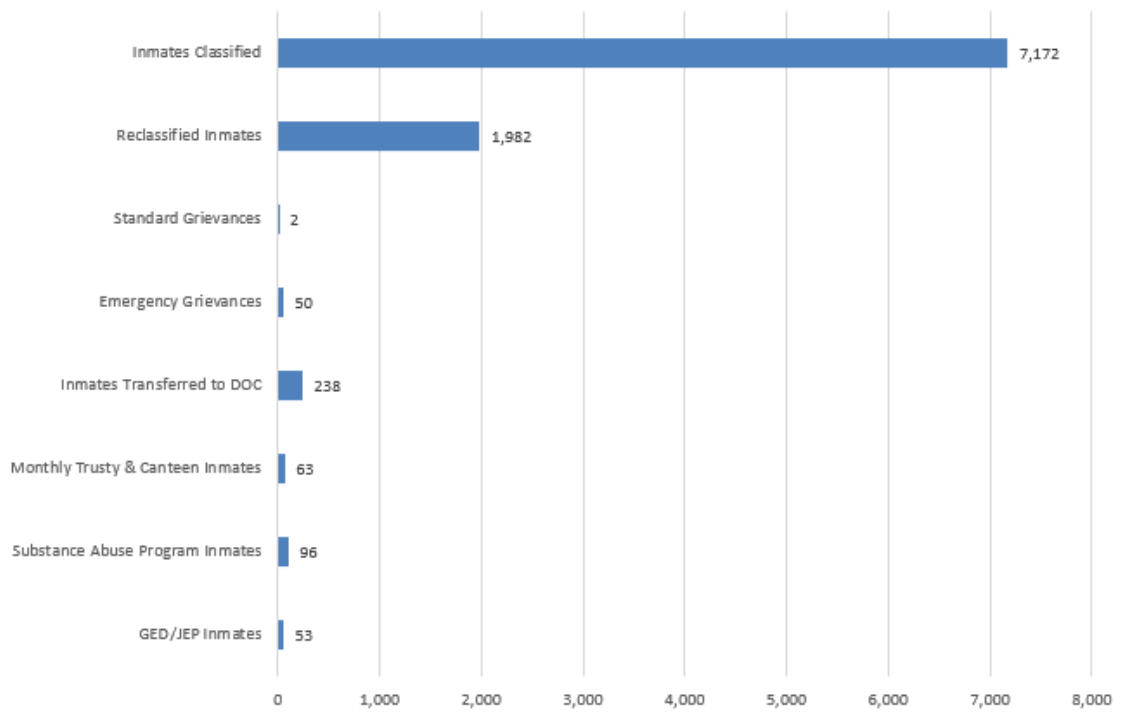


Training Division



Total Training Hours 6,239

Classification Division





Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office

2501 James Madison Blvd.
Virginia Beach, VA 23456
(757)385-4555

Additional information, including on Civil Process enforcement, Community Relations and the Correctional Center, and many other resources can be found on the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office website at vbso.net.

Social Media

Follow the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office on Facebook at facebook.com/vbsheriffsoffice, LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/virginia-beach-sheriffs-office, on X at [@VBSO](https://twitter.com/VBSO) and on Instagram at [@vbsheriffsoffice](https://instagram.com/vbsheriffsoffice).

Published Oct. 15, 2024