

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

LEXINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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MAKING LEXINGTON COUNTY A SAFER PLACE.



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Throughout these pages, please find data and statistics collected during 2023. It is our hope these summaries showcase the value Lexington County Sheriff's Department (et al.) brings to our community.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

SHERIFF JAY KOON

2015 - PRESENT

As we reflect on the past year, I am pleased to present to you our 2023 annual report. I view this publication as something we can put before you as a testament to our unwavering commitment to professionalism, compassion, honesty and relationships.

Despite the challenges all law enforcement agencies are facing around the country, we saw some very encouraging trends and numbers take shape in 2023.

The last year brought positive numbers in terms of our county budget and funding from sources, as directed by the General Assembly.

Thanks to members of the Lexington County Council and Lexington County Administrator Lynn Sturkie, we again received a significant amount of funding to make our pay package more lucrative for current and prospective employees.

The department received more than \$180,000 in state dollars to start a gun lab that will make us more efficient in our investigations of gun crimes.

As you'll note in the *Major Events* sections of this report, for the first time ever, we started the 2023-2024 school year with an SRO in every school. That was the result of a 15-month process that featured municipal police departments working with us, as well as current employees and some who joined us from other agencies with an eye on an SRO role. I'm proud of the way we came together to protect those who work at and attend our community's schools.

You'll also read about the night Deputy Jacob Smith was shot responding to a volatile call for service that resulted in one death on the scene and the suspect's death following a lengthy vehicle pursuit. We're very fortunate Jacob is still with us and now serving as a major crimes investigator.

I encourage you to take a close look at the statistics on crime. Among those highlights, burglaries, larcenies, motor vehicle thefts and robberies are all down significantly, according to 2023 data. And a longer look shows this is a true trend as major crimes in Lexington County have declined by more than 2% between 2017 and 2021.

Our success is a testament to the hard work, creativity and dedication of our talented LCSD family. Their passion and ingenuity continue to propel us forward, inspiring confidence and trust among our citizens and partners.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Lexington County. It is your continued support and trust that make me so proud to be your sheriff.



— Sheriff Jay Koon

ABOUT US

EXPERIENCING GROWTH WITH LEXINGTON COUNTY

The first recorded sheriff of Lexington County was Thomas Herbert who was appointed to the office in 1806. The first courthouse and jail for the area was located in the town of Granby (located in present day Cayce). Back then, the Sheriff's Department was a one-man operation with the sheriff living and working in the jail and courthouse. Until the 1970s, most investigative activities focused on illegal whiskey brewers and a few major crimes such as homicide and rape. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, illegal drug use and distribution became a significant problem.

Along with drug-related offenses, other crimes grew in frequency including business robberies, computer crimes, domestic violence and fraud. Today, increased calls for service and population in Lexington County have further stretched law enforcement resources and challenged the Lexington County Sheriff's Department to keep pace with changing law enforcement needs. At one time, most jails and courthouses were constructed and located on a town's main street. The Lexington County Courthouse and Jail, built in 1940, were located at 139 Main St.. This facility, part of which still stands today, housed a maximum of 42 inmates. By the 1960s, the facility was too small to accommodate the Sheriff's Department's needs. A new law enforcement facility was constructed in the late 1970s. This law enforcement facility, located at 521 Gibson Road, still serves as the headquarters facility for the Sheriff's Department. A new jail was built in 1999, and the Sheriff's Department complex has undergone many renovations since 1972.

We serve citizens primarily in the unincorporated areas of the county with assistance to other local agencies.

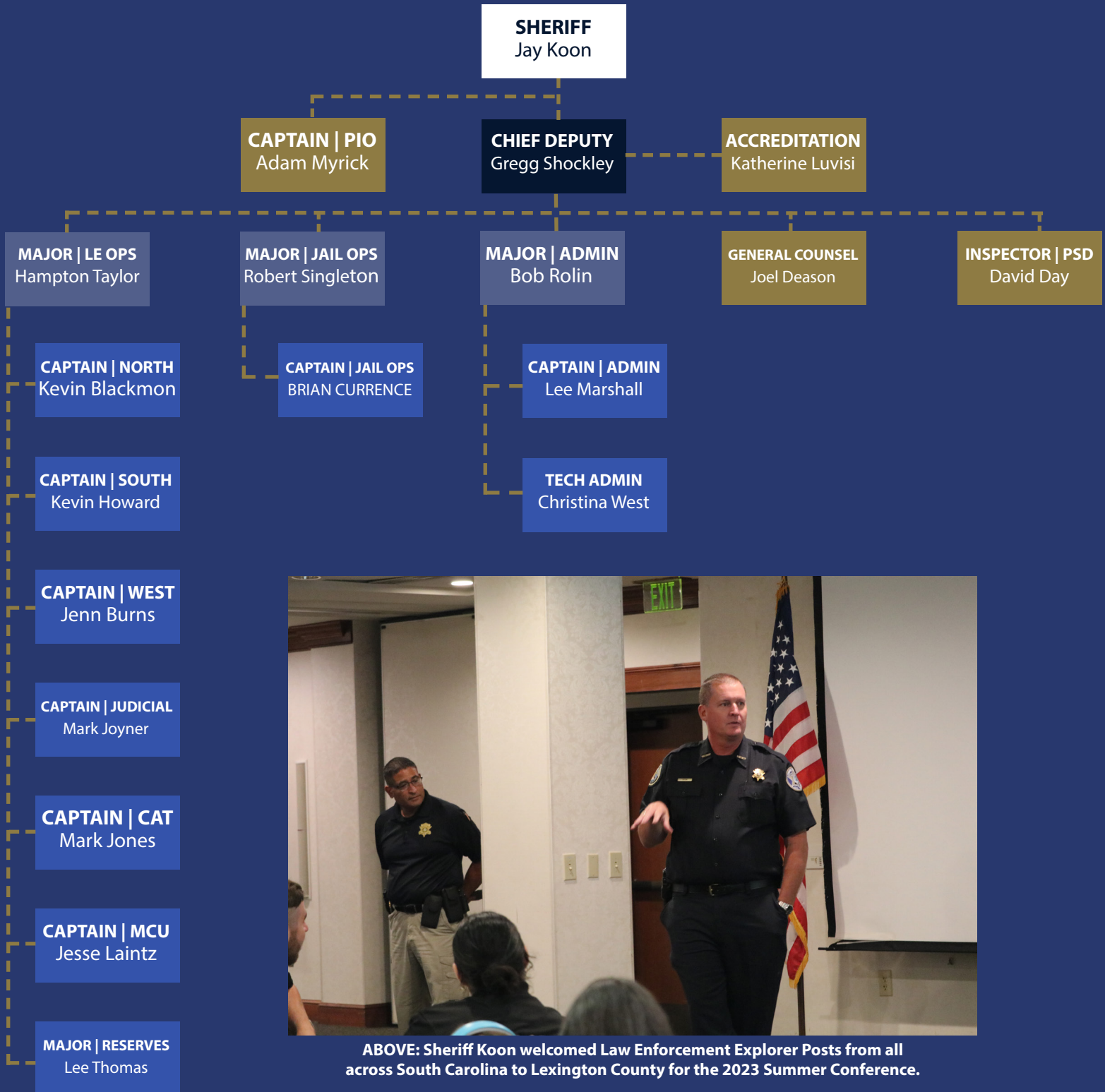
MISSION

To work as a professional law enforcement team to build relationships with those we are sworn to serve.

VISION

Making Lexington County a safer place.

ORGANIZATION CHART



ABOVE: Sheriff Koon welcomed Law Enforcement Explorer Posts from all across South Carolina to Lexington County for the 2023 Summer Conference.

ACCREDITATION

The Lexington County Sheriff's Department is an internationally accredited agency. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies awarded accreditation to our department for the first time in 1999 and most recently awarded the department its eighth accreditation in 2021. CALEA has established standards designed to prevent and control crime; increase agency effectiveness and efficiency; increase cooperation and coordination with other agencies; and increase citizen and employee confidence in the goals, objectives, policies and practices of the agency.

In September 2022, the department received its eighth Law Enforcement Accreditation Award from the South Carolina Law Enforcement Accreditation. To achieve dual accreditation status in law enforcement, the department has to be in compliance with all CALEA standards and an additional 12 SCLEA standards.

In October 2023, the department successfully completed its second year of the four-year cycle for CALEA accreditation. A specially trained assessor conducted a review of 117 standards to verify compliance.



**SOUTH CAROLINA
LAW ENFORCEMENT
ACCREDITATION, INC.**



MAJOR EVENTS

3 NEW MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

The K-9 unit welcomed three new members to the team in 2023: Zastava (top), Sirkan (middle) and Jim (bottom). These highly trained and skilled K-9's bring a whole new level of dedication and capability to the unit, which consists of nine K-9's and eight handlers. Zastava, Sirkan and Jim have undergone rigorous training to excel in various tasks, including search, narcotics detection and apprehension. Each dog has a keen sense of smell and unwavering determination, which helps keep our community safer. Together, Zastava, Sirkan and Jim, and other members of the unit, tackle any challenge and protect our community with unwavering dedication. We're proud to welcome them to our law enforcement family and confident that they will serve with distinction.



UNPRECEDENTED PAY INCREASE

The approval and implementation of the 2023-2024 budget brought substantial increases to Sheriff's Department employee compensation. County pay bands went up by 7%. This translated into a 7% cost-of-living increase for current employees and merit salary increases of up to 3%, depending on an employee's annual evaluation. Retention incentives were paid out for those who were employed at LCSD prior to January 2018. The 2023-2024 budget also provided for membership for all sworn personnel in both the South Carolina Law Enforcement Officers' Association and the South Carolina Sheriffs' Association. The SCSA membership includes a generous insurance benefit with both on- and off-duty coverage. This is yet another example of the benefit of living in a county where law enforcement is appreciated and supported, not only by those who live and work here, but also by those who serve our community as members of County Council.

SHERIFF OF THE YEAR

Sheriff Koon was named the state's Sheriff of the Year by the South Carolina Sheriffs' Association. Berkeley County Sheriff Duane Lewis proudly nominated Sheriff Koon, who he called a "professional, innovative, community-minded law enforcement officer." In nominating Koon, Lewis praised him for being proactive in identifying the unique needs of his community and quickly addressing them, particularly as it relates to gang activity and sexually violent predators. Sheriff Lewis highlighted Sheriff Koon's commitment to the law enforcement profession as he stresses the importance of inter-agency training and always makes himself available to other law enforcement leaders during delicate law enforcement situations. Sheriff Koon received his award in July at the association's annual conference. Moseley Architects presented Sheriff Koon with a check for \$1,000 for the Lexington County Sheriff's Foundation.



MAJOR EVENTS

CERTIFIED THERAPY K-9

Introducing Fred, our newest addition to the LCSD family! As a certified therapy K-9, Fred is a charming and affectionate furry friend who brings joy to those in need. With his gentle demeanor and wagging tail, Fred has already stolen the hearts of everyone he meets. Fred underwent rigorous training to become a certified therapy dog, ensuring he is well-prepared to interact with individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Whether he's offering a comforting paw during difficult times or simply providing companionship and warmth, Fred is always ready to lend a helping paw. We're thrilled to have Fred on board and look forward to the positive impact he'll make in our community. Be sure to give him a warm welcome and plenty of belly rubs when you see him around!



A LANDMARK ACCOMPLISHMENT

For the first time in history, each public school in Lexington County has a permanently assigned school resource officer, 39 of whom are Lexington County deputies. This landmark accomplishment required a lot of work and cooperation from all the law enforcement agencies and the five school districts across Lexington County. Lexington County deputies serve as SRO's in 35 schools, with two on duty each day at Chapin, Irmo, Lexington and White Knoll high schools. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster and the General Assembly worked together in 2023 to provide funding for SRO's across the state. With an SRO in every school, those who attend and work at each school can rest assured each SRO is a specifically trained law enforcement officer focused on crime prevention, crisis response and community-oriented policing.

MEDAL OF VALOR

Lexington County deputy Jacob Smith was awarded the South Carolina Sheriffs' Association's Medal of Valor in September. Deputy Jacob Smith was shot after responding to a home invasion at a Lexington home last September. Jacob acted bravely and selflessly when he found himself in an intense situation. Smith took fire from a man who also shot and killed a woman with whom the man had a prior relationship. His actions protected other deputies and likely saved lives. Even as his recovery continues, Jacob continues to embody what makes him a great law enforcement officer...the willingness to help others and serve his community.



RETIREES

WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR THE DEDICATION AND SERVICE OF THOSE WHO RETIRED IN 2023:



Detective Tom Bryant
retired 11/30/2023



Deputy Tom Fine
retired 07/21/2023



**Master Detention Deputy
Deloris Gethers**
retired 12/18/2023



**Detention Deputy
Leslie Gray**
retired 05/31/2023



**L.E. Victim Advocate
Terry Hall**
retired 09/01/2023



Detective Mike Merckle
retired 10/06/2023



**Senior Detective
Mike Phipps**
retired 11/17/2023



**Code Enforcement Officer
Guy Triano**
retired 02/03/2023

PROMOTIONS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO WERE
PROMOTED IN 2023:

Harry Stevenson to Code Enforcement Officer
John Gietz to Senior Investigator
Patrick Myers to Investigator
Yvette Wiggins to Detention Deputy
Steven Rinehart to Master Deputy (Patrol)
Cheryl Iliff to Master Deputy (Detention)
Joni Novak to Master Deputy (Detention)
David Shinn to Master Deputy (Detention)
Christian Aiken to Senior Deputy (Traffic)
Paul Schneider to School Resource Officer
Joseph Staley to Master Deputy (Patrol)
Joshua Vicari to Master Deputy (Patrol)
James Boston to Detention Deputy
Alania Spohn to Investigator
LaTanya Pough to Sergeant (Detention)
Tayler Kleemoff to Code Enforcement Officer
Shawn Mohundro to Investigator
Harlea Ford to Field Training Officer (Patrol)

Deva Imel to Field Training Officer (Patrol)
Ariel Rios to Field Training Officer (Patrol)
Peter Ruiz to Field Training Officer (Patrol)
Morgan Boozer to School Resource Officer
Samuel Garr to School Resource Officer
Landon Nutt to School Resource Officer
Darias Echols to School Resource Officer
Melissa Dancha to School Resource Officer
Joel Cooper to L.E. Victim Advocate
Justin Pettigrew to Master Deputy (Patrol)
Yesenia Gonzales-Martinez to L.E. Victim Advocate
James Lanfear to Resident Deputy
Tyler Douglas to Resident Deputy
David Hellman to Sergeant (Civil Process)
John Patrick McManus to Master Deputy (Civil Process)
Tyarti Gerald to Master Deputy (Patrol)
Logan Skrabak to Master Deputy (Patrol)

HUMAN RESOURCES AND RECRUITING



Applications received and employees hired

36 LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPUTIES, 13 DETENTION DEPUTIES AND 16 ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS HIRED IN 2023.

Applications for employment were up in 2023, compared to 2022 (about 6%). Applications received that resulted in hire was 7%.*

Fewer employees separated in 2023 (61) from the department than in 2022 (69).**

In addition to managing the agency's pre-employment screening process, among other things, the LCSD HR team is also responsible for coordinating internal promotional testing, overseeing the timesheet submission process, managing extra-duty employment of deputies, coordinating the department's awards program, managing Family Medical Leave Act and Workers' Compensation compliance, coordinating light duty assignments, managing employee assistance program referrals and fitness-for-duty evaluations, facilitating the employee performance evaluation process and scheduling random drug testing.



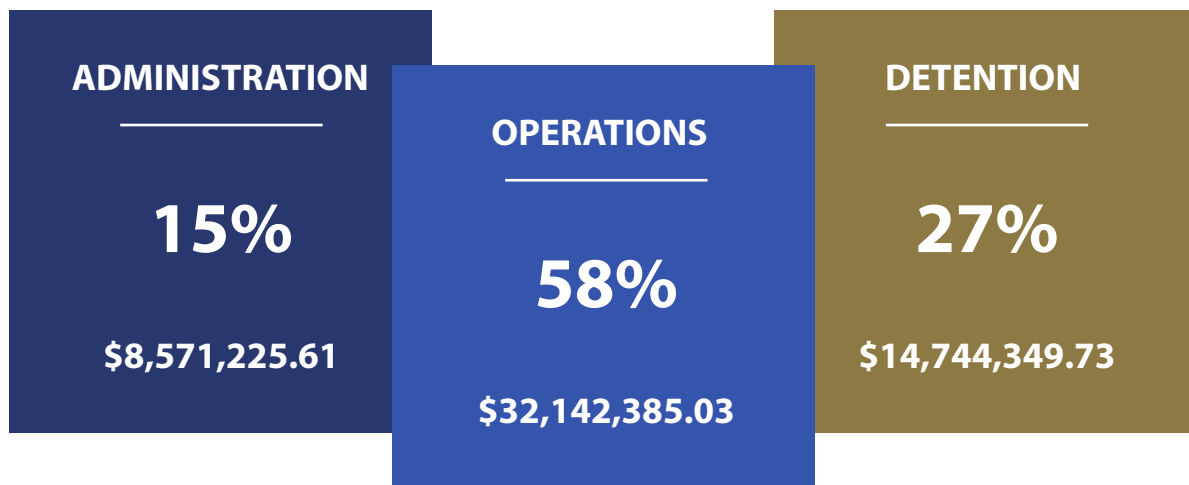
In 2018, LCSD implemented **sign-on, retention and recruiting** incentives. All those continued in 2023. The Sheriff's Department also launched a new joinLCSD.com website in 2022 as an effort to improve the recruiting effort of the department.

*Factors that may be contributing to this are the complexity and thoroughness of background investigations, increasing competition by surrounding agencies for a shrinking pool of qualified candidates and employees leaving the profession for other interests.

**Recruiting and retention incentives may have contributed to this.

BUDGET, FINANCE AND GRANTS

BUDGET = \$55,457,960.37



On the back of the county tax bill, the Sheriff's Department's portion of money received is labeled "law enforcement," constituting approximately 35% of the total funds received for county operations.

The budget is funded primarily by property taxes.

The funds appropriated to the department are used to pay personnel, operations and capital costs necessary to provide all services for which Sheriff Koon is responsible.

FY 22/23 GRANTS

School Resource Officers \$402,915	State Body-Worn Camera Program \$412,280
Victims of Crime Act \$196,063	State Appropriation Firearms Lab \$156,760
Violence Against Women Act \$133,063	Impaired Driving Countermeasures Project \$93,084
Law Enforcement Network \$10,000	Drug Lab Chemist \$113,174
Justice Assistance \$41,736	State Dept. of Aging - Alzheimer's \$13,326.38

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

This division, often referred to as Internal Affairs, is responsible for preserving the integrity of the agency, and its employees, through a comprehensive and objective process of investigating allegations of employee misconduct.



All citizen complaints and allegations, to include anonymous complaints against the agency or its employees, are investigated.



Our use of **body-worn cameras** has proven to be an instrumental tool in the review of misconduct investigations.



There were no sustained excessive use of force investigations in 2023.

76
INVESTIGATIONS

6% decrease in total investigations
(vs. 81 in 2022)

50

INTERNAL
AFFAIRS
INVESTIGATIONS

22

SUPERVISORY
INVESTIGATIONS

6

MISCELLANEOUS
INVESTIGATIONS

15

SUSTAINED
INVESTIGATIONS

TRAINING

Aims to ensure every member of the department is highly qualified to best serve our citizens. State law mandates **40 hours per year** of in-person training for all sworn corrections personnel and **40 hours every three years** for all sworn law enforcement personnel. Additionally, reserve deputies require monthly training equivalent to that which full-time officers undergo. The majority of this mandated training cannot be outsourced, and is delivered by a full-time staff, augmented by subject matter experts from across the department.

8,868

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION IN 2023
VS. 7,040 HOURS IN 2022

864

HOURS OF
L.E. BLOCK
TRAINING

144

HOURS OF
DETENTION
BLOCK TRAINING

100

HOURS OF
RESERVE DEPUTY
BLOCK TRAINING

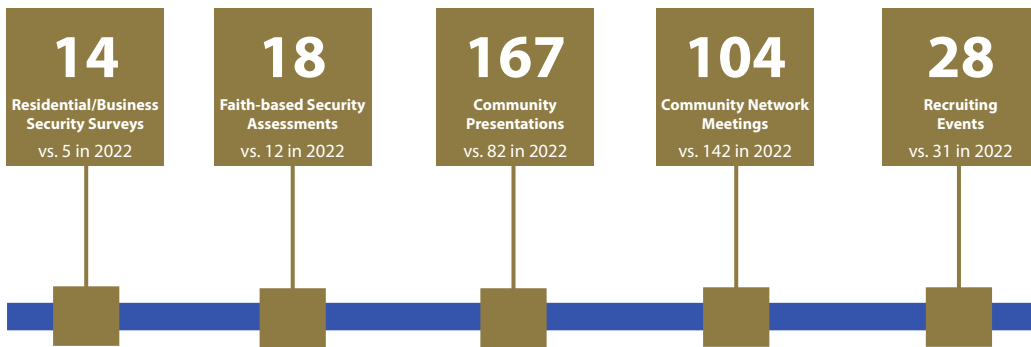
1,440

HOURS OF
PRE-SERVICE
TRAINING

COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

Seeks to **form partnerships with various businesses, churches, charity and civic groups** throughout Lexington County. The focus of CAT is to leverage strong relationships with these various groups to focus on crime prevention, citizen education, community involvement and meeting the needs of citizens in distress.

- A.L.I.C.E. Training Program (Active Shooter)
- Holiday Food-Toy Drive
- Shop with a Cop
- A/C & Fan Drive and Distribution
- Cops on the Coop
- Polar Plunge for Special Olympics
- National Night Out
- Citizens Academy
- Operation Deputy Claus



PUBLIC INFORMATION

Responsible for getting the **right information to the right people at the right time.**

Duties include: social media, media liason, news releases and briefings, digital content and photography/videography storytelling. The goal of the PIO is to educate and inform the public and agency stakeholders to **improve the community's safety or response to a given risk** or emergency.



Across all platforms in 2023, there were over **21 million impressions, nearly 2.8 million engagements** and a total of **11,470 new followers.**

FRONT DESK

Operating on a **24-hour basis**, the front desk of our law enforcement complex is responsible for:

Connecting citizens with appropriate LCSD personnel and services, issuing nonferrous metals permits, accepting expired or discarded prescription medications for destruction, verifying ownership and releasing towed vehicles, performing record checks on sex offender registrants, scheduling and disseminating information concerning funeral escorts, performing telephonic welfare checks on elderly citizens and providing support to the Records and Warrant divisions after hours.

Handled more than **60,970 phone calls** in 2023

Helped in processing more than **1,200 registered sex offenders**

Telephone Reporting Unit generated **1,035 incident reports**

Assisted in more than **1,850 NCIC entries**

Issued **1,827 metals permits**

Coordinated **793 property checks**

RECORDS

The primary responsibility of this unit is to maintain **accurate archives of department records**, while ensuring the timeliness and accuracy of data shared with state and federal partners.

In 2023, this unit did the following:

Responded to more than **24,400 requests for records**

Conducted more than **25,300 record validations**

Exspunged **more than 2,800** criminal records

1 SLED audit in 2023



Requests for records **increased 9% over 2022** because of FOIA and subpoena requests.



The **Criminal Intelligence Unit** is staffed with one sworn officer and two staff analysts. It is responsible for providing support to the operational and administrative functions of the department through various statistical analysis and investigative support efforts.

INDEX CRIMES

These are reportable to SLED and the FBI as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Act; and one of the statistics the Intel Unit is responsible for maintaining and reporting.

Index Crime Category	2020	2021	2022	2023
Aggravated Assault	472	500	596	527
Arson	24	21	18	22
Burglary	1026	819	793	704
Larceny	3857	3549	3543	2908
Motor Vehicle Theft	863	667	696	564
Murder	10	12	6	15
Rape	58	57	53	69
Robbery	85	64	66	50
TOTAL	6395	5689	5771	4859



Index crime totals **decreased by nearly 16%**.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This team manages a full range of technology systems and is responsible for **24/7 user support** for nearly **500 employees**, including **225 mobile law enforcement units**.

In 2023, **4,830 work tickets were closed**, compared to 4,086 tickets in 2022.

There was a **16% increase** in tickets from 2022.



The IT department manages more than **225 body-worn cameras or in-car camera systems**, more than **300 mobile phones** and **200 perimeter cameras**.

LEXINGTON COUNTY DETENTION CENTER

ABOUT DETENTION

Led by a major, captain and five lieutenants, the detention center serves the entire county's correctional needs.

There are three major structures. The "old jail," built in 1975, with a rated capacity of 102, stands as a three-story hardened structure attached to the main Sheriff's Department building. In 1991, the annex complex opened with a rated capacity of 176. It is designed to house inmates with minor charges or a lower risk of escape. Finally, in 1998, a third structure comprising multiple housing pods opened with a capacity of 321.

The housing of federal inmates is not a mandatory program, but revenue generated from providing temporary housing for pre-trial federal inmates subsidizes operational costs of the Lexington County Detention Center.

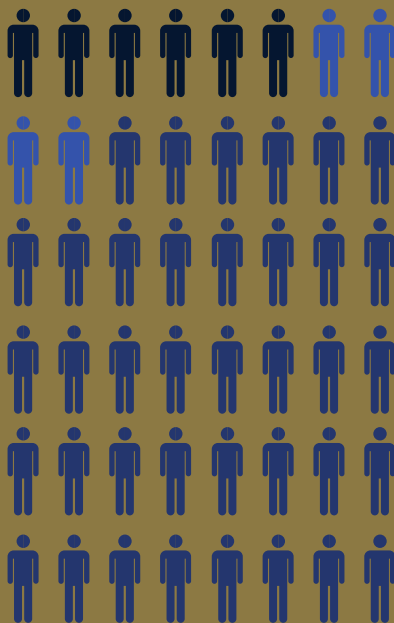
Today, the collection of detention structures has an official rated capacity of 599, according to the S.C. Department of Corrections.

Optimal maximum occupancy is 420 (allows for inmate movement and behavior management programs).

The average daily population was 598 in 2023. The number of inmates we housed on a daily basis increased 11% from 2022.

598

AVERAGE DAILY JAIL
POPULATION IN 2023



The mission of the Lexington County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is to provide a fair, effective and efficient judicial system in Lexington County; with the vision that the Lexington County judicial process is a comprehensive, coordinated and interconnected system of justice that efficiently utilizes all resources to serve and protect its citizens.

The council has met twice since the coronavirus pandemic, once in 2020 and once in 2021. Both years have seen LCDC's average daily population reach its lowest level in more than a decade.

While infection control protocols enacted during the pandemic affected detention population levels, the work of the council had prompted a downward trend in average daily population.

The council will continue its work to safely reduce the average daily jail population, and effectively manage the growth on Lexington County's justice system.

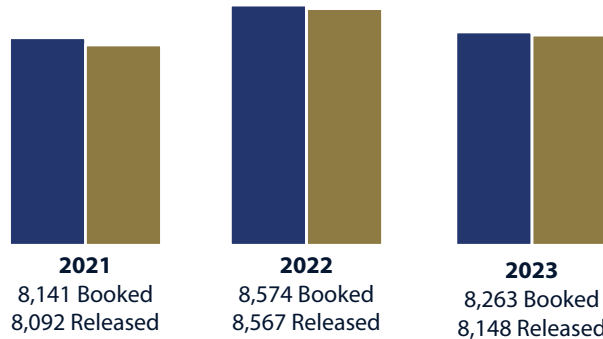
DAILY POPULATION

BOOKING

The Booking Unit is where all the “ins” and “outs” take place. In 2023, the Booking Unit received an average of **23 inmates per day** and managed about the **same amount of releases**.

Nonsworn staff members focus on the administrative tasks in booking, leaving the available certified detention deputies to focus on managing the inmates.

- 74% of inmates booked in 2023 were **residents** of Lexington or Richland counties
- 26% of inmates booked were **residents** of a county outside the Midlands



HOUSING

The Housing Unit handles **14 units** including proper separation of males and female inmates, as well as ensuring proper classification levels, supervision needs & more.

Research has shown providing inmates with activities that keep them busy, as well as rewarding positive behavior, results in favorable reductions in inmate behavior problems. **Inmate Behavior Management:** six key elements that, in combination, help jails reduce a wide array of negative, destructive and dangerous inmate behavior. We began our implementation of IBM in August 2017.

- **One detention deputy** per 70-100 inmates
- Mental health watch requires **two detention deputies**
- Maximum security inmates require **two detention deputies**

A detention deputy assigned to a housing unit is responsible for the **safety and security** of the unit and the overall well-being of the inmates. They are trained to recognize and diffuse disputes before they turn violent, recognize and address medical emergencies, ensure inmates take required medication, enforce hygiene standards and oversee canteen distribution.

JAIL PROGRAMS

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

MIDLANDS FATHERHOOD COALITION

VA OUTREACH PROGRAM

LRADAC*

LRADAC-EMPOWERMENT CENTRAL PROGRAM

U-TURN FOR CHRIST

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

PROVIDENCE HOME

JUVENILE ARBITRATION TOUR

LCDC BOOKS ON WHEELS

PRE RELEASE AND REENTRY PROGRAM

MEN'S FRATERNITY

DELANCEY STREET

LIFE SKILLS

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

ANGER MANAGEMENT

ROCK OF AGES MINISTRIES

(*MOST PARTICIPATION)

VISITATION

Detention deputies and administrative staff assigned to visitation oversee inmate visitation matters. Since 2014, the percentage of video visitation has increased, which allowed a reduction in staffing demands to one or two deputies. Certain professional visitations are still held in person, and are supervised by the visitation detention deputies.

In 2023, **2,417 on-site visits** were managed by the unit. **13,408 visits** were conducted by **remote video visitation**. This is a total of **15,825 visits** handled by the unit last year.

TRANSPORTATION

Detention deputies assigned to the Transportation Unit are responsible for transporting inmates who are sentenced to SCDC, nonemergency hospital transports or inmate doctor appointments and federal inmates when requested by the U.S. Marshals Service.

The unit completed **28 federal inmate transports** and **74 evaluation transports** in 2023.

The unit completed a **total of 218 transports** in 2023.

NCCHC ACCREDITATION

The National Commission on Correctional Health Care is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of correctional health services and helping jails provide effective and efficient care. The Lexington County Detention Center has maintained NCCHC accreditation since 2008. The audit is conducted every three years by licensed/certified doctors affiliated with the commission, to ensure the site is compliant with the 67 standards. The last audit in January 2021 found compliance with 100% of essential standards and 96% of important standards.

The commission granted accreditation to the detention center which will carry until the next facility audit, to be conducted in 2024.

COURTS

SECURITY

The Court Security team is part of Judicial Services. It comprises 19 deputies and 10 part-time civilian bailiffs. The main focus of the team is to ensure a safe, secure and orderly environment at the **Marc H. Westbrook Judicial Center**. All persons entering the courthouse are screened for weapons. Members of the Court Security team also assist in providing screening and security for events at the Lexington County Administration building and County Council meetings.

- Provided security to more than 1,100 courts in session
- Conducted more than 3,100 prisoner transports
- Scanned more than 120,000 packages
- Provided more than 2,300 hours of magistrate security hours
- Prohibited entry of more than 1,800 dangerous items



Knives are the most brought-in prohibited item. In 2023, court security detected **1,045 knives**.

SERVICES

Judicial Services comprises several different teams, both sworn and administrative, that work together to support safe and efficient judicial operations. This division is overseen by a captain. The majority of the duties are specifically dictated by state law. The judicial system handles matters both criminal and civil in nature. A significant amount of time is spent dealing with civil process. In 2023, we served more than **96% of the civil process** demands received.

- 65 court ordered repossessions
- 299 arrests
- 535 hospital security hours
- 360 court-ordered evictions

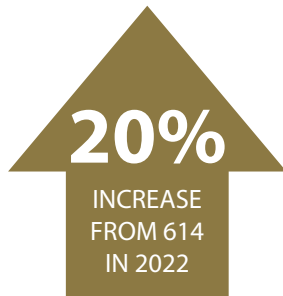
- Resolved more than 4,000 arrest warrants
- Handled 605 court-ordered evictions (up 36% from 2022)
- Received 16,520 civil process orders and served 15,862
- Provided more than 275 hours of County Council security (increased 37% from 2022)

FUGITIVE TASK FORCE

This group of deputies specializes in **fugitive investigations** and **warrant service** in which the suspect has serious outstanding charges or is actively evading apprehension. Since many of the suspects avoiding apprehension are ultimately located outside of Lexington County, the task force also completes necessary **extradition transports**.



**739
ARRESTS**



20%
INCREASE
FROM 614
IN 2022



The unit conducted **67 extraditions** in 2023. This was primarily out-of-state extraditions for the **Internet Crimes Against Children Operation (ICAC)** conducted this year by the Major Crimes Unit.

ARREST WARRANT ATTEMPTS: **2,249**

ARREST WARRANTS SERVED: **1,373**

TRANSPORTS: **67**

TRANSPORT HOURS: **752**

ADOPTED CASES: **307**

SEARCH WARRANTS: **63**

As members of the **U.S. Marshals Fugitive Task Force** program, team members regularly work with other local, state and federal agencies to aid in the apprehension of many dangerous fugitives.

NARCOTICS

The **Lexington County Multi-Agency Narcotics Enforcement Team** comprises 27 employees with a mixture of sworn county deputies, sworn municipal police officers and administrative staff. Multiple officers work in Task Force Officer status for federal agencies including the ATF, DEA, FBI and U.S. Marshals Service.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
ASSIGNED CASES	631	793	954	659	783
WARRANTS OBTAINED	313	507	637	532	592
FELONY WARRANTS	271	443	443	482	552
MISDEMEANOR WARRANTS	129	42	64	78	40

4,567
PILLS SEIZED IN
2023

METH MADE UP
50%
OF DRUGS SEIZED
IN 2023

23
CLASSES WERE
TAUGHT TO SCHOOL
STAFF AND SROs

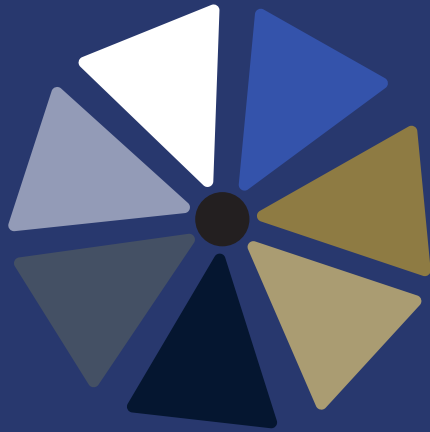
In 2023, the team investigated **783 cases** and obtained **592 warrants** with **552 being felony warrants**. That is a **10% increase** from 2022.

The team seized **\$132,592.54, six vehicles, 154 firearms, 258 pounds of marijuana, 68.8 pounds of methamphetamine, 15.1 kilograms of cocaine, 7.31 ounces of crack cocaine, 2.9 ounces of heroin and 10.65 pounds of fentanyl**. Additionally, the unit made **259 controlled buys**.

There was a substantial increase in narcotic overdoses in 2023. There were **776 reported overdoses** resulting in **35 deaths and 468 doses of Narcan** administered by law enforcement and EMS. The increase in reported overdoses in 2023 (7%) might be a result of EMS and DHEC beginning to enter data into overdose mapping in June of 2021.

MAJOR CRIMES UNIT

This unit comprises **49 sworn and administrative employees**, both working full- and part-time positions, and is divided into seven teams.



- One detective team
- One domestic violence team
- One special victims team
- One victim services team
- One crime scene investigators team
- One evidence management team
- One sex offender registry team

In 2023, Major Crimes Detectives investigated **2,393 cases** and obtained **978 warrants with 674 being felony warrants**. In 2023, the Major Crimes Unit investigated **15 homicides** to include two self-defense shootings and one self-defense stabbing and three murder-suicides.

The Major Crimes Unit investigated and reviewed an array of different criminal offenses in 2023 to include **15 murders, 121 deaths under investigation, 43 robberies, 258 aggravated assaults, 235 criminal sexual conducts, 62 criminal domestic violence assaults** of a high and aggravated nature and **495 domestic assaults**.

In 2023, the Lexington County Sheriff's Department's Victim Services continues to expand their services beyond general victim services. They have continued specialized services for the elderly and domestic violence victims as well as juvenile victims. Victim Services assisted **7,995 victims of 7,572 cases** reviewed by the unit.

12,147

ITEMS OF EVIDENCE
COLLECTED IN 2023

1.4%

INCREASE IN CASES
2,360 in 2022 vs. 2,393 in 2023

-2.3%

DECREASE IN EVIDENCE
COLLECTED

12,445 in 2022 vs. 12,147 in 2023

DOMESTIC ASSAULTS MADE UP

40%

OF MCU INVESTIGATIONS IN 2023

-8%

DECREASE IN FELONY WARRANTS

733 in 2022 vs. 674 in 2023

858

LABS COMPLETED BY CRIME
SCENE INVESTIGATORS IN 2023

TICKETS & WARNINGS

Deputies issued approximately **13,735 tickets or warnings** in 2023, compared to 13,190 in 2022. This is a **nearly 4% increase from 2022**. Demographic analysis of these citizen contacts is conducted to ensure such contacts are representative of our service population. It should be noted that given the presence of three major interstates and the amount of nonresident traffic present in our county, demographic comparisons are not necessarily representative of our county demographics. Service population breakdown is based on data collected by the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles related to collisions.

2022 TICKETS	F	M
ASIAN	18	31
BLACK	695	1,064
NATIVE AMERICAN	4	12
WHITE	1,438	2,342
OTHER	4	17

2023 TICKETS	F	M
ASIAN	34	45
BLACK	945	1,093
NATIVE AMERICAN	4	10
WHITE	1,670	2,360
OTHER	4	36

ARRESTS

The law permits some discretion in an officer’s decision to arrest someone for **minor offenses** rather than simply issue a courtesy summons. Concerns about jail crowding have contributed to decisions to issue a **courtesy summons** more often than in years past for most minor misdemeanor violations.

ARRESTS	2022	2023
ASIAN	12	15
BLACK	1,460	1,774
NATIVE AMERICAN	5	4
WHITE	3,395	3,256
OTHER	17	13

5,062

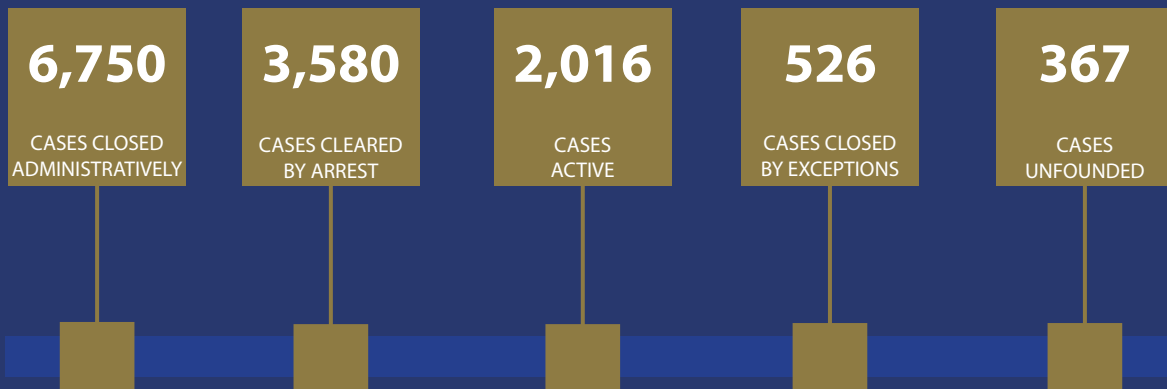
TOTAL
CUSTODIAL
ARRESTS

Out of more than 331,000 contacts with citizens in 2023, less than 5% resulted in a ticket or warning. Less than 1.6% resulted in an arrest. Less than 1% resulted in a need to use force.

CASE ASSIGNMENT & CLEARANCE

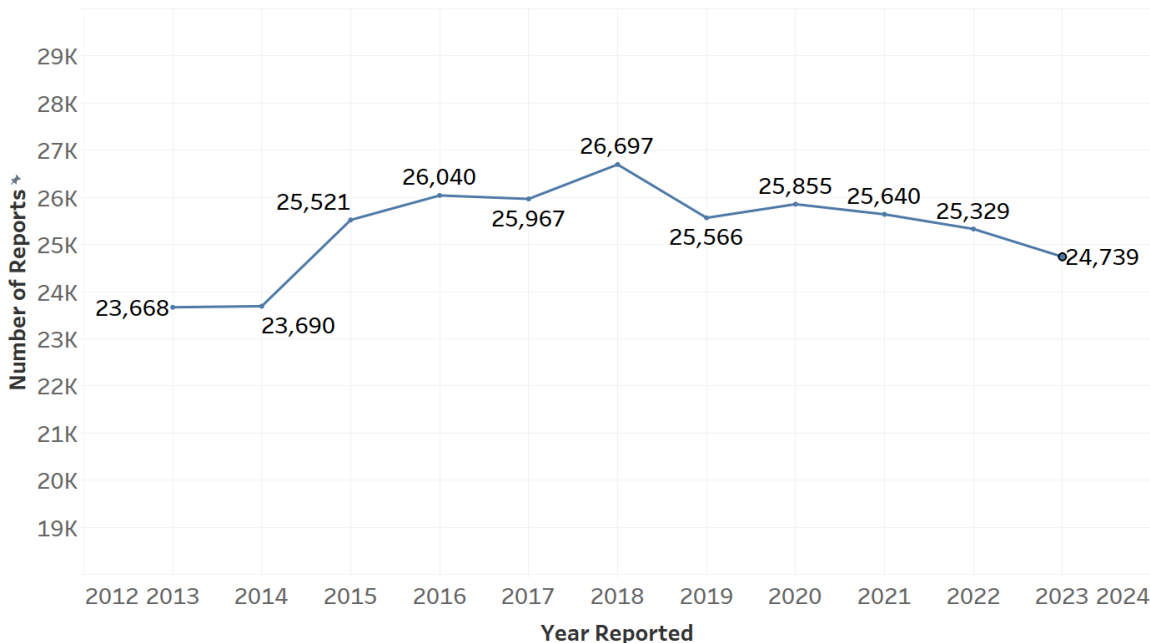
Tracking case status is an important measurement related to follow-up investigations. Once an incident report is assigned for follow-up, the status of the case is marked as "active." Upon conclusion of the investigation, the status is updated according to the outcome. If investigative efforts are exhausted or insufficient evidence is found to continue an investigation, the case might be "closed administratively."

Cases are given a status of "cleared by arrest" when one or more suspects are identified and arrested. When a suspect is identified and sufficient evidence exists to make an arrest, but circumstances outside the control of the investigator prevent an arrest, a case will be assigned a status of "exceptionally cleared."



Cases are assigned a status of "unfounded" when the investigation determines a crime or the events originally alleged to have happened did not occur. Overall, case clearance for index crimes in 2023 **remains high at 32%**.

Reports Written



-2.3%
DECREASE IN
REPORTS
25,329 in 2022 vs.
24,739 in 2023

-6%
DECREASE IN
REPORTS ASSIGNED
FOR FOLLOW-UP
14,021 in 2022 vs.
13,239 in 2023

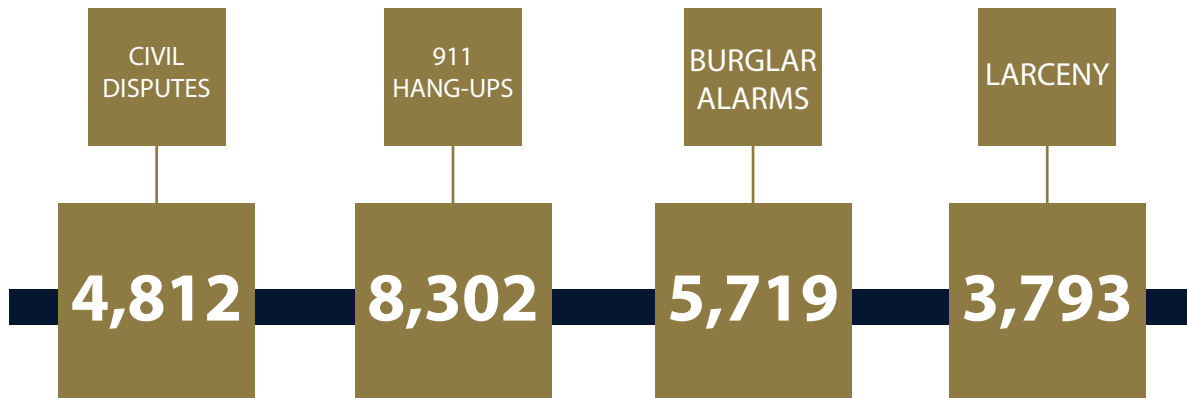
This chart shows the number of incident reports written each year. While calls for service have decreased, the reports written have similarly decreased.

CALLS FOR SERVICE

Calls received at the **Lexington County Communications Center** are categorized by a general nature type at the time of dispatch, based on the primary concerns relayed by the caller.

- Burglar alarms, civil disputes, 911 hang-ups, welfare checks and larceny are all top call types year-after-year.
- 911 hang-ups have decreased (24%) after six years of increase.
- Suspicious persons calls have decreased every year for the last six years. Since 2018, the calls have decreased almost 41% (4,823 in 2018 vs. 2,849 in 2023).

Calls for service include any call or activity recorded that originate from a citizen or person other than an LCSD employee. **Administrative demands** that do not otherwise fit neatly into a specific call type but are the result of citizen demands for service include requests for phone calls to inquire about an investigation or ask questions about the court process.



-6%
DECREASE IN
CALLS FOR SERVICE
96,686 in 2022 vs.
90,808 in 2023

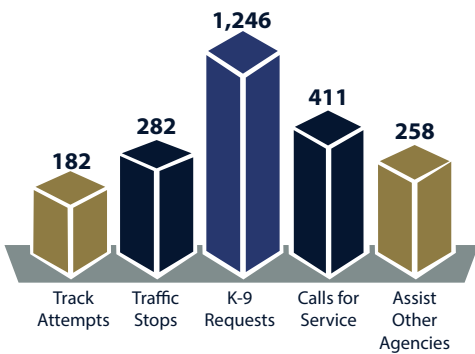
84,465
PROACTIVE EVENTS
INITIATED BY
DEPUTIES

-24%
DECREASE IN
911 HANG-UPS
10,957 in 2022 vs.
8,302 in 2023

K-9 UNIT

Comprised of **eight K-9 handlers** and **nine K-9's**, this unit assists with all K-9 needs the department has including: drug sniffs, explosive sweeps, violent criminal tracks/apprehension and missing and endangered person tracks.

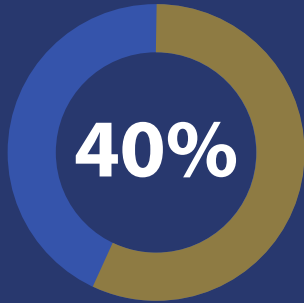
- **Six K-9's** are German shepherds, Belgian malinois and shepherd-malinois mixes used for tracking/apprehension and narcotics detection
- **One K-9** is a Belgian malinois used to track/apprehend and is explosive sniff-trained
- **One K-9** is a bloodhound used to track missing and endangered persons
- **One K-9** is a German shorthaired pointer used for tracking, article searching and narcotics detection
- **One sergeant and two master deputies** manage the five remaining handlers



SWAT

The **Special Weapons and Tactics** unit is a single agency team that is mission-capable in all areas required by the National Tactical Officer Association to be a Tier 3 team, including emergency hostage rescue operations. The team comprises a **team commander, assistant team commander, two team leaders, two assistant team leaders, a sniper team leader, an assistant sniper team leader** and **15 operators**. This unit responds to escalated calls, such as barricaded individuals, that might need additional assistance and tools. It is a collateral duty position which requires 24/7 on-call availability. Training is a major component of being on the SWAT team. In 2023, the team responded to **20 operations** which resulted in **109 total hours of operation**.

- Completed 109 hours of operation
- Served in 20 operations
- Forced entry four times
- Enacted use of force four times



40% of SWAT operations were search warrants in 2023.

TRAFFIC UNIT

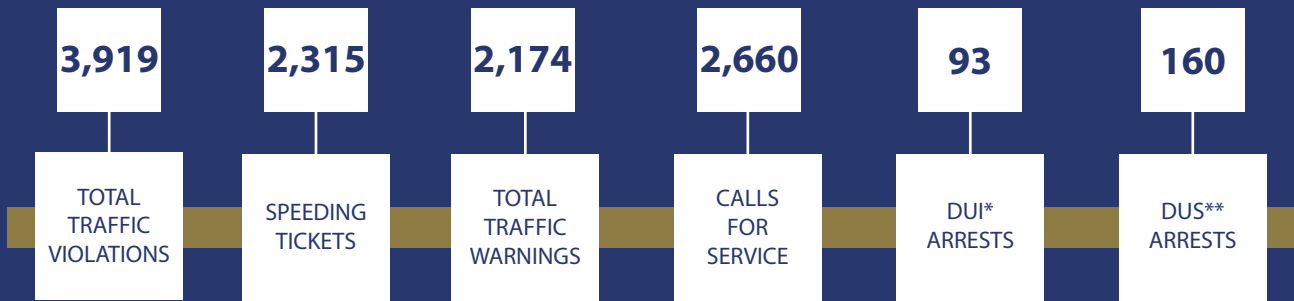
The Traffic Division is aligned in two teams that cover all aspects of traffic to include **accident reconstruction, public safety checkpoints, ancillary traffic services, traffic control, traffic enforcement** and **funeral escorts**. The unit has eight deputies with one sergeant who oversees the unit and two master deputies who manage each of the teams. There is a traffic deputy on call for any needs the department might require, and the teams work a rotating shift of days, nights and weekends.

71.25

hours worked for the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program

484

hours worked for radar saturation to address resident complaints



*DUI = Driving Under the Influence **DUS = Driving Under Suspension

Selective Traffic Enforcement Program

This program is responsible for the assignment of personnel to traffic enforcement activities at times and locations where hazardous or congested conditions exist. Such assignments are usually based on factors such as traffic volume, collision experiences, frequency of traffic violations and emergency service needs.

DRONE UNIT

The unit is made up of **five FAA Part 107 licensed pilots**. The team trains twice a month for four hours. In 2023, they trained for **191 hours**.

More than **780 flights** were flown in 2023, primarily in support of finding missing persons and apprehending fugitives. There were **594 flights associated with requests**.



Above: The Drone Unit assisted with aerial documentation of a 2023 homicide crime scene.

BODY-WORN CAMERAS

3rd
YEAR OF FULL
DEPLOYMENT

MORE THAN
156,000
VIDEOS UPLOADED

54TB
OF VIDEO
COLLECTED

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The Special Operations unit includes the **marine patrol**, vehicle management, **bomb squad**, emergency management and radio maintenance/programming.

MARINE PATROL:

RESPONDED TO
4
DROWNINGS

ASSISTED IN THE
ANNUAL FBI
POST-BLAST
TRAINING

RESPONDED TO
8
BOATS IN DISTRESS

BOMB SQUAD:

RESPONDED TO
10
SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES

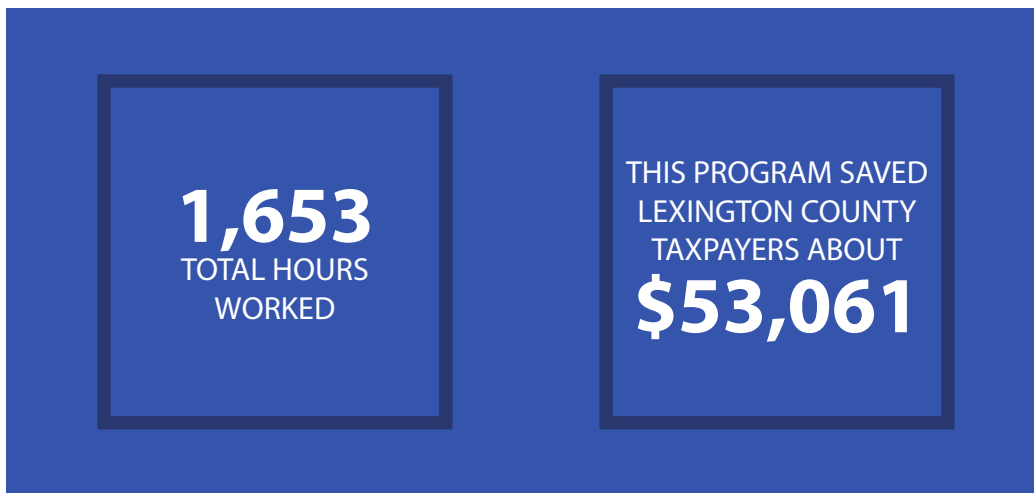
RENDERED
18
DEVICES SAFE

RESPONDED TO
24
BOMB THREATS

RESERVE DEPUTY PROGRAM

On a volunteer basis, reserve deputies work to assist our full-time, sworn personnel by riding with them and helping respond to calls. When he or she accrues enough hours, a reserve deputy can begin to patrol on his or her own.

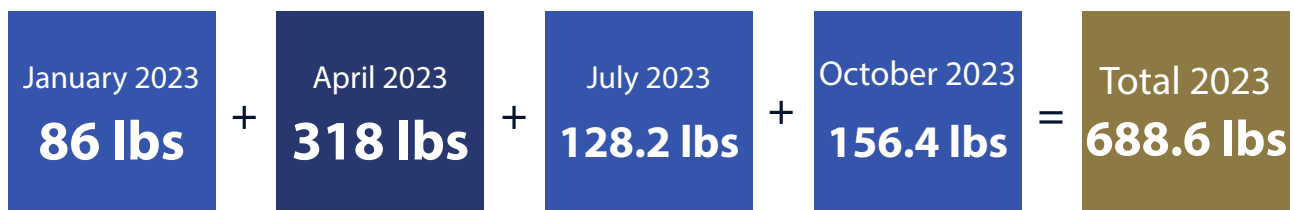
The program is made up of **one major, one captain, one lieutenant, one sergeant** and **seven other members**.



DRUG TAKE-BACK

This program allows people to **dispose of old or unwanted medications safely**. With drop boxes at LCSD Headquarters and each of the three patrol region service buildings around the county, Lexington County residents have multiple, convenient options to get rid of medicine they don't need.

- Headquarters drop box: 521 Gibson Road, Lexington (24/7)
- North Region drop box: 111 Lin creek Drive, Columbia (business hours)
- South Region drop box: 102 Airport Road, Pelion (business hours)
- West Region drop box: 4079-D Augusta Highway, Gilbert (business hours)



This program saw a **44% increase** in pounds collected from 2022.

PHOTOS



LEFT: Coats for Kids in Dec. 2023 collected more than 300 pieces of winter items to give to people in need.

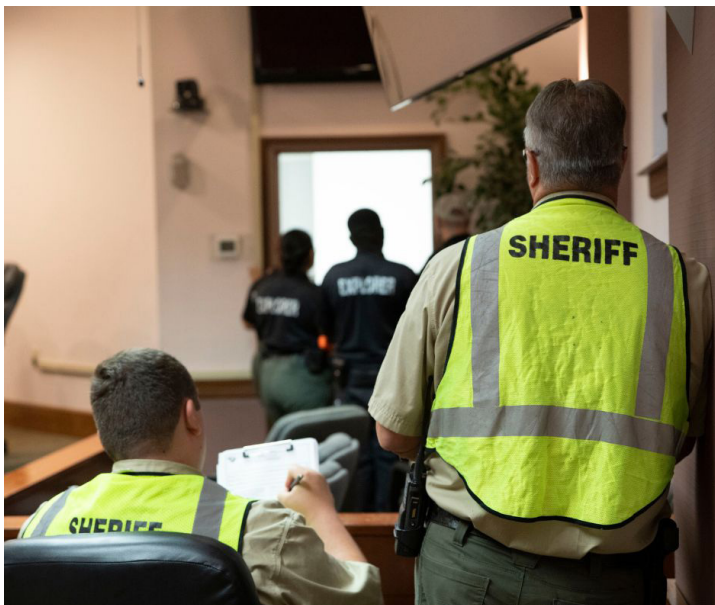
RIGHT: SRO Echols read "Officer Buckle and Gloria" to Deerfield Elementary students in August 2023.



LEFT: The Community Action Team and Resident Deputies participated in a parade for residents at Westminster Memory Care - Lexington in May 2023.

PHOTOS

RIGHT: First Baptist Church of Lexington provided home-cooked meals to first responders in February 2023.



LEFT: LCSD hosted the S.C.A.L.E. Summer Conference for Law Enforcement Explorers from all over the state in August 2023.

RIGHT: Middle schoolers from Lexington County came to headquarters in February 2023 for Shadow Day where they experienced a behind-the-scenes look at the agency.





LEXINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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