



# Spokane Police Department Strategic Plan 2022-2023



## CHIEF'S MESSAGE

---

It is my pleasure to present the Spokane Police Department's (SPD) Two-Year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan serves as the roadmap that directs the work of SPD over the next two years. It provides the framework for operations, work performance, and focus for each SPD employee, whether commissioned or non-commissioned. It also aligns with the City's Strategic Plan to ensure we move towards our ultimate goal of being the safest and cleanest City of our size in the US.



SPD's Strategic Plan provides details on the primary goals for the department for 2022 and 2023. These primary goals include:

1. Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors
2. Combat crime by using innovative policing practices and technology
3. Foster and strengthen community partnerships and relationships
4. Expand our highly successful collaborative approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health issues
5. Ensure the wellness and health of our employees, emotionally and physically
6. Continue training surrounding implementation of the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act, as well as police reforms passed during the 2021 WA State legislative session
7. Develop and retain a qualified, diverse workforce that represents the community in which we live, work and play
8. Maintain a progressive approach to best practices revolving around training, equipment, programs and service to the community and our employees

Police departments across the nation are facing high expectations, multiple competing interests, limited budgets, intense scrutiny and advancing technology.

More than ever, we find ourselves wearing multiple hats—law enforcer, counselor, mediator, mental health professional, order maintainer, problem solver, peacekeeper. We proudly accept these tremendous responsibilities, serving our city and each other, working for each and every one of our community members to the best of our abilities and with the highest level of integrity.

Without question, our employees are our most valuable asset. Without them, we would not have enjoyed the strides in community engagement, training, policy and administrative review that we have attained. SPD has dedicated and exceptional staff who are committed to improving every day. I could not be more proud of the men and women of our department who serve Spokane every day in so many different ways. It is a true honor to be a part of this agency and see the evolution we have attained and will continue to make as we serve our community.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>Major Department Functions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Department Key Partnerships</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2020 Numbers at-a-Glance</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mission</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Vision</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Core Values</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Spokane Police Department Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Priority 4</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Priority 5</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Priority 6</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Priority 7</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Priority 8</b>	<b>20</b>



## MAJOR DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

---

**Patrol:** The Patrol Division responds to 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls for service, which are the core services for the department. Patrol officers are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. In between community-generated calls, patrol officers proactively patrol neighborhoods, respond to crime prevention missions, and address chronic issues in the city.

**Investigations:** Investigative units within SPD include: Major Crimes, Special Victims Unit (sexual assault cases, child pornography investigations), Domestic Violence Unit, Civil Enforcement Unit, Special Investigations Unit, Criminal Intelligence Unit, and the Gang Unit (Safe Streets Task Force).

**Neighborhood Precincts:** SPD has three precincts – Downtown, South Spokane, and North Spokane. Precincts are staffed with Neighborhood Resource Officers who work on quality-of-life issues and detectives who focus on property crimes.

**Academy:** The Spokane Police Academy, in addition to being responsible for the department's on-going training and hiring processes, oversees BLEA (Basic Law Enforcement Academy) which is the only CJTC (Criminal Justice Training Commission) sanctioned satellite Academy in the state.

**Crime Analysis:** Provides support and intelligence to the Spokane Police Department, primarily Command Staff, so they can maximize resources and implement strategies to have the greatest impact on crime reduction. Analyst responsibilities include recognizing emerging crime trends, patterns, and series, and help identify potential suspects and crimes.

**Records:** SPD's Records Division provides records management for multiple law enforcement agencies and criminal justice agencies throughout Spokane County.

**Property & Evidence:** Evidence staff is responsible for the security and safeguarding of all evidence and property it receives. The facility maintains 175,000+ items of evidence, found/safekeeping or surrender items at the current time.

**Volunteers:** SPD volunteers include Reserve Officers, CO-OP college volunteers, high school age Explorers, and Citizen Volunteers. In 2021, volunteers donated 19,485 hours.

**Community Outreach:** The members of the SPD Community Outreach Unit engage in ongoing conversations with community leaders across a wide spectrum of interests and attend a multitude of meetings and events. These officers employ long-term strategies at a deeper level of community engagement and outreach, helping to maintain our relationships with partner organizations.

**K9 Unit:** The K9 Unit is made up of specially trained handlers and K9s, who support patrol. In 2021, the K9 Unit had 987 patrol deployments and located 324 people.

**Specialty Assignments:** These assignments are in addition to an officer's regular duties. Assignments include: Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT); Hostage Negotiation Team; Explosive Disposal Unit (EDU); Dignitary Protection Team; Tactical Team (TAC); Public Information Office (PIO); Tactical Flight Team; Field Training Officer Team (FTO); Behavioral Health Unit (BHU); and Honor Guard.



## MULTI-AGENCY LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERSHIPS

---

The Spokane Police Department works closely with a variety of law enforcement agencies and task forces within the region.

**Spokane Regional Behavioral Health Unit**

**Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR)**

**Safe Streets Task Force**

**Human Trafficking and Exploited Children Task Force**

**Joint Terrorism Task Force**

**Drug Enforcement Agency Task Force (DEA)**

**U.S. Marshals Violent Offender Task Force**

**Explosive Disposal Unit (known as Bomb Squad)**

**Home Security Investigations Missing and Exploited Children Task Force**

**Internet Crimes Against Children**



## 2021 NUMBERS AT-A-GLANCE

<p><b>227,579</b></p> <p>City Population</p>		<p><b>541,188</b></p> <p>County Population</p>
	<p><b>356</b></p> <p>Commissioned Officers Authorized</p>	<p><b>93</b></p> <p>Civilian Support Staff</p>
	<p><b>47</b></p> <p>Volunteers</p>	
<p><b>94,300+</b></p> <p>Calls for Service with Police Response</p>	<p><b>28,000</b></p> <p>Officer-Initiated Activities</p>	<p><b>\$69 M</b></p> <p>Police Budget</p>
	<p><b>\$205.3 M</b></p> <p>City Budget (General Fund)</p>	



## MISSION

---

The Spokane Police Department is committed to providing excellence in policing, enhancing the safety and security of individuals, and building partnerships to better the lives of our community members.





## VISION

---

**Our vision is to serve every member of our community with professionalism, integrity, and compassion so that with every interaction we continue to build trust, preserve safety, and model ethical policing.**





## VALUES

---

**INTEGRITY:** Adherence to ethical principles; soundness of character, honesty.

**PROFESSIONALISM:** Holding to the highest and most effective standards of the law enforcement profession while continually pursuing progressive improvement through education, training, and experience.

**COMPASSION:** A feeling of concern and understanding for an individual's distress, accompanied by a desire to help.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

---

<b>1</b>	<b>Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Combat crime by using innovative policing practices and technology</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Foster and strengthen community partnerships and relationships</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Expand our highly successful collaborative approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health issues</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Ensure the wellness and health of our employees, emotionally and physically</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Continue training surrounding implementation of the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act, as well as police reforms passed during the 2021 WA State legislative session</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Develop and retain a qualified, diverse workforce that represents the community in which we live, work and play</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Maintain a progressive approach to best practices revolving around training, equipment, programs and service to the community and our employees</b>



## **Help create a safer, healthier, and more supportive environment for all residents and visitors**

**Homeless Outreach Team:** The Homeless Outreach Team was established in July 2021, as part of the Spokane Police Department's and City of Spokane's approach to helping individuals experiencing homelessness. Four officers are assigned to the Team, who provide outreach 7 days a week. The officers proactively contact those experiencing homelessness, as well as responding to reported locations of illegal encampments. Officers provide information regarding services such as shelter, treatment facilities, and food distribution, in hopes of connecting people to resources. The Team also supports Code Enforcement in cleaning up litter and items left behind from illegal encampments. The Homeless Outreach Team collaborates with other departments of the City and agencies such as SNAP, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, and The Guardians. SPD will continue providing officers for the Homeless Outreach Team and will work with other agencies to respond to concerns from business owners, shoppers, tourists, service agencies, and people experiencing homelessness.

**Precinct Work in Communities:** Precincts respond to concerns at the neighborhood level, taking their priorities from the community and responding to what is reported to our exceptional COPS volunteers and Neighborhood Councils. The Precinct receives referrals to problem properties called in from Crime Check.

Officers work with business and service agencies, including special emphasis patrols, foot and bike patrols, safety assessments (CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design), and hold crime prevention training. Precincts also collaborate with Code Enforcement to remove thousands of pounds of debris from downtown, parks, and the Spokane Riverbank. Precincts partner with neighborhood residents on nuisance properties, where unsafe conditions exist or where crime repeatedly occurs. Neighborhood Resource officers (NROs) work with neighbors to resolve various criminal issues, such as stolen vehicles, stolen property, guns, and drugs. NROs also work with Code Enforcement and City Legal to resolve issues and move chronic nuisance properties through the abatement process.

Beginning in the summer of 2021, the North Precinct expanded their proactive approach to combatting problems in the neighborhoods by receiving 311 referrals, especially illegal parking and illegal campsites, in addition to Crime Check referrals. NROs can respond to campsites as soon as they receive the information, which assists in quicker resolution at problem locations. Northside NROs handle a large majority of parking complaints in North Spokane.

**Precinct Meetings and Partnerships:** Precincts regularly collaborate with various Neighborhood Councils, and attend a variety of meetings, including Mental Health Stabilization Project team, Downtown Community Court triage, Hot Spotters, Downtown Security Group, Spokane Treatment and Recovery Services Board, Business Improvement District Board, Salvation Army Board, Continuum of Care Board, Washington State Public Safety Review Panel, YWCA, Homeless Coalition, and the East Spokane Business Association.

# 1, *continued*

---

**Online 911 Reporting for Non-Emergency Incidents:** On August 23, 2021, SPD adopted online 911 reporting for non-emergency incidents. In partnership with Spokane Regional Emergency Communications (SREC), this online option has been implemented to make it easier and more convenient for citizens to report certain non-violent crimes that are not in progress. This service is not monitored 24/7. Citizens who are reporting incidents that are currently in progress should contact 9-1-1 or Crime Check at (509) 456-2233 depending on the incident being reported. <https://srec911.org/online-reporting>

**New Avenues for Victims of Older Sexual Assault Cases:** The SPD recently started reviewing cold case sexual assaults and has now set up a phone line and email to aid in investigations. The review is under the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Project which calls for testing of thousands of rape kits across the state backlogged for submission to Washington State Patrol labs. These cases may include sexual assault reports filed July 15, 2015, and prior. SPD is working with the Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Victim Advocates with Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW). SPD is asking anyone who wishes to inquire about his or her case, to place a call to the listed phone number, and/or send an email to the listed email address. The survivor is asked to leave their name and a contact phone number. An investigator and/or victim advocate will return a phone call to verify identity, answer questions and discuss options moving forward.

*Spokane Police Department:* call 509-625-4240 or email [spdvictimreporting@spokanepolice.org](mailto:spdvictimreporting@spokanepolice.org).  
*LCSNW Victim Advocates:* Call or text the 24/7 Sexual Assault Support Line, 509-624-7273.

**New Human Trafficking Tip Line:** The Federal Bureau of Investigation, in conjunction with the Spokane Region's "Safe Streets Task Force," is implementing a new tip line to receive tips and information regarding human trafficking in our area. [INLANDNWHT@fbi.gov](mailto:INLANDNWHT@fbi.gov) is now active for use by the public to share tips they may have regarding incidents related to human trafficking in our area.

**Safe Place:** Safe Place is an agreement between businesses, the police department, and the community to report crimes (especially hate crimes) and provide a place for victims to safely wait for police. Business owners request a decal to display near their front door to highlight their commitment to and participation in the initiative. Participating businesses agree to report crimes and are required to train employees, volunteers, and staff on the reporting of crime, especially hate crimes. Businesses agree to allow a victim/complainant to wait inside their location for police arrival. Spokane Police Department began working on implementing Safe Place in the fall of 2020. As of August 2021, we have 41 participating locations, and we hope to gain more during 2022-2023. See [my.spokanecity.org/safeplace](https://my.spokanecity.org/safeplace) for details.

**Collaboration with Spokane C.O.P.S.:** Spokane Community Oriented Policing Services (C.O.P.S.) helps to promote and support an environment for a safe community. As a local non-profit agency, neighborhood C.O.P.S. shops have been working with Spokane Police to help mediate neighborhood issues, facilitate block watch programs, provide Operation Family ID and organize National Night Out Against Crime, since 1992. They host a multitude of programs that enhance community safety. In 2021, C.O.P.S. and SPD collaborated on Business Crime Prevention Conference. To find a C.O.P.S. station near you, visit: <https://www.spokanecops.org/>



## 2 Combat crime by using innovative policing practices and technology

---

**Crime and Intelligence Analysis:** The Spokane Police Department employs evidence-based strategies to drive down crime. Timely and accurate intelligence assists officers and investigators in combatting crime and improves our safety and quality of life in Spokane. Intelligence is shared with SPD Commanders so they can maximize resources and implement strategies to have the greatest impact on crime reduction.

Crime Analysts study emerging crime trends and patterns and help identify potential suspects. Analysts identify concentrations of activity in the community, hours of day impacted, notable crime M.O.'s, and if there are prolific offenders or problem addresses contributing to crime in those areas. Analysts provide the department with visual intelligence tools such as GIS crime mapping. Analysts also provide the department information on wanted offenders so that they can be brought to justice.

Analysts recommend Patrol "Missions" to address key crime problems impacting the community. These Patrol "Missions" are developed for Patrol and the North, South, and Downtown Precincts. SPD leaders evaluate this information and consider intelligence they receive from their respective Neighborhood Resource Officers, Detectives, and the community when implementing "Missions" to reduce crime. SPD leaders deploy appropriate tactics and strategies to cover the scope of the problem with the goal in having the greatest impact on crime reduction. Strategies can consist of increased visible presence, enforcement, community outreach and partnerships depending on the nature of activity (e.g., property crime, violent crime, quality of life).

In 2021, SPD began a pilot program, where Crime Analysts pinpointed the locations with the most calls for service and sent the data to the Neighborhood Resource Officers (NROs) so that the NROs can follow up on the locations. The focus is on the top ten locations for every neighborhood. The program has been very successful; NRO efforts at these locations have resulted in a significant reduction in calls for service. In the Logan and Minnehaha neighborhoods, monthly calls for service for the top ten locations were at a high of 211 calls but fell to 13 calls in June 2021 for all locations combined. The reduction in calls for service stemmed from NRO actions at those locations, which included referrals to the Behavioral Health Unit and Adult Protective Services, consistent contacts at the locations, obtaining signage, and issuing Chronic Nuisance Notices when appropriate.

**Technical Assistance Response Unit Digital Lab:** Digital evidence – which can include email, text messages, hard drives, social media accounts, and audio and video files – is often crucial to solving criminal cases. SPD's Technical Assistance Response Unit provides information technology support, digital evidence management, video analysis, and digital forensics for SPD and for regional partner agencies. The Unit is currently implementing a modern lab information management system which will be launched in the first quarter of 2022. The Unit is also working towards lab accreditation through the American National Standards Institute's National Accreditation Board.

---

## Foster and strengthen community partnerships and relationships

**Community Engagement is Key:** The Spokane Police Department is committed to continual quality engagement with the community at every level of our department. SPD has a dedicated Community Outreach Unit to engage in ongoing conversations with community leaders across a wide spectrum of interests and attend a multitude of meetings and events. These officers employ long-term strategies at a deeper level of community engagement and outreach, helping to maintain our relationships with partner organizations.

**Serving Vulnerable Populations:** The Community Outreach Unit partners with World Relief on a regular basis. World Relief has helped train SPD about their programs, as well as anticipated refugees coming to Spokane and has held orientations for new community members to meet the police department. SPD also works with Refugee Connections, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, and Partners with Families and Children (Child Advocacy Center). SPD is currently working on programs and services for unaccompanied refugee minors in Spokane. SPD also partners with Spokane County Juvenile Probation on outreach presentations and connections to services.

**Expanding Outreach Programs:** SPD's flagship youth outreach program, the Police Activities League (PAL), continued to serve hundreds of youth participants in 2021. SPD recently added PAL Boxing. Thanks to the support of the Spokane Police Foundation and its donors, several youth participants, with the support of police officers, were able to participate in PAL Boxing. The boxers are beginning to see results from their intensive training sessions that consist of cardio and technical instruction. The commitment has been impressive, and we are proud of the work the youth are putting in to improve their health and better themselves as individuals. Thank you to Spokane Boxing Gym!

We will continue our emphasis with youth outreach and will explore new avenues for the Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) program for teens. New programs such as Bigs in Blue (in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters) will grow throughout 2022-2023.





## **Expand our highly successful collaborative approach in helping individuals experiencing behavioral health concerns**

**Expansion of Spokane Regional Behavioral Health Unit:** The BHU was created with grant funding in 2019. The goal of this grant was to establish a regional multidisciplinary team that will more efficiently and effectively respond to people in behavioral health crises, resulting in reductions to emergency department and jail stays. The BHU pairs law enforcement with mental health clinicians. Both the Spokane Police Department (SPD) and the Spokane County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) operate co-deployed teams with Frontier Behavioral Health (FBH) to respond to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

The co-deployed teams intervene on crisis calls for service throughout Spokane County and make immediate referrals to resources such as respite beds, outpatient mental health treatment, voluntary inpatient treatment, primary care clinics, and other supportive services. The teams also help connect individuals to resources such as veteran programs, healthcare, insurance, SSI/disability assistance, education and job training, ID cards, food, housing, crime victim assistance and advocacy, and payee assistance. The BHU's work increases continuity of care and improves crisis planning and relationship building with individuals and the community.

In the fall of 2021, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) awarded additional grant funds to expand the BHU. The 2021 grant award effectively doubles the impact of the BHU, adding four SPD officers and three SCSO deputies to the program. Each law enforcement officer is paired with a mental health clinician. The additional co-deployed teams will strengthen the partnerships with providers of diversion services and will result in increased coverage of the region.

**75% of BHU contacts result in diverting people in crisis from the hospital or jail.**

**Officer Training in Behavioral Health:** Since 2013, SPD requires all officers to complete a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) class within a year of graduating from the Academy. This class is in addition to Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission's statewide mandatory CIT Refresher course for all commissioned officers. SPD continues to train officers in Motivational Interviewing, as well.

**Partnership with Community Courts:** Officers staff the Community Court, an alternative court model for cases arising out of low-level criminal violations or quality of life crimes, connecting individuals with community resources. Precinct staff often work with Community Court and outreach providers in efforts to provide vulnerable populations the help they need.

**Partnership with Mental Health Crisis Stabilization Facility (MHCSF):** SPD will be partnering with the MHCSF, our region's first pre-booking jail diversion option for eligible individuals to offer a full range of medical, mental health and substance use treatment services all at a single location. The facility became operational in the fall of 2021.

## **Ensure the wellness and health of our employees, emotionally and physically**

**New Programs to Support Officer Wellness:** Participation in Responder Health started May 1, 2021. Responder Health a program designed specifically for First Responders and is geared towards counseling and education that is trauma-related; in other words, unique towards police work. The founder of the program struggled finding a trauma-informed counselor that could speak specifically to law enforcement-related issues, and subsequently started this program, that has grown to 40,000 trauma-informed counselors nationwide. This program is available for officers, their significant other, and their children. All our dispatchers are included in this program.

**New Training:** SPD leadership is continually looking for additional resources for resilience training and additional wellness services for detectives in the Special Victims Unit and Major Crimes Unit. SPD sponsored an “Emotional Survival Training” for law enforcement employees and their spouses. SPD hosted a patrol survivor presentation, “How I Survived a Gunfight,” by Christopher Hoyer. The presentation was a detailed recap of an officer ambush, including radio traffic and crime scene photos. It provided an interactive discussion of patrol level first responder survival, focusing on four key points, including mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual preparedness. SPD will continue to seek training that assists our staff with the unique stressors and pressures common to law enforcement.

**New Mentorship Program:** In 2021, SPD’s mentorship program for new officers was formally established. New officers are assigned a mentor after they have graduated from the Academy. The goal of the mentorship is to pair the officer with a peer who can answer questions and guide them through the process, including the highs and lows of being a Spokane Police Officer. This program will further our retention of new employees.

**Peer Assistance Team (PAT):** Officers assigned to PAT are those officers who have been involved in critical incidents in the line of duty. The incidents can either be on or off duty, personal crisis, or a professional crisis or exposure to traumatic incidents. The team works very closely with the SPD Chaplains who are an intricate part of our team. The PAT team also provides support to other agencies and other first responder entities to include Fire, EMT and dispatch services. All team members are CISM trained (Critical Incident Stress Management), both Level 1 and 2, and trained in the debriefing of critical incidents, which is one of the most important elements in the healing process.

**Chaplains:** Spokane Police Chaplains assist police officers responding to murders, suicides, and accidental deaths by meeting with family members and others at the scene who may be in shock and/or dealing with grief, anger, and heartache. Officers responding to such calls also experience their own emotions and challenges. In 2021, Police chaplains responded to 459 DOA calls in 2021 and 16 SWAT calls. Chaplains donated 6400 volunteer hours. They ensure our police officers have the emotional support they need as the constant exposure to trauma can take a mental and physical toll. A primary focus of the SPD Chaplains’ is ministering to members of the Police Department.

## Continue training surrounding implementation of the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act, as well as police reforms passed during the 2021 WA State Legislative Session

**Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETCSA):** Washington voters passed Initiative I-940 in the November 2018 election. The legislation was renamed to the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETCSA). LETCSA requires additional training in a myriad of topics, including violence de-escalation and mental health. Our current focus is ensuring that we implement training in all areas required through LETCSA. Our students in the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) are currently taking LETCSA's pilot course, The Historical Intersection of Race and Policing. SPD leadership took the class in November 2021. Additionally, we have been teaching those concepts at In-Service to all officers.

De-Escalation Training is woven through BLEA. De-escalation is incorporated into 293 hours of instruction. Instructors teach de-escalation in the classroom, and it is emphasized throughout BLEA during mock scenes, practical tests, and recruit interactions.

The new Patrol Tactics model permeates the entire Academy structure and is taught to all officers at In-Service Training.

Patrol Tactics ALWAYS A.L.E.R.T.
Legal Authority (probable cause versus voluntary contact)
Active Leadership
Location (using contact, cover, and the environment; safety principles)
L.E.E.D. (Listen and Explain with Equity and Dignity)
Resource Management (equipment, available resources like Behavioral Health Unit)
Threat Management (threat recognition, prioritization, and response)

**2021 Washington State Legislative Changes:** In May of 2021, several new bills were passed affecting law enforcement. Most of the new laws became effective on July 25, 2021. As a result, SPD revised 20 existing policies and created a new policy for Protection Orders.

In July of 2021, SPD held two mandatory training sessions for supervisors and provided roll call training to the entire department regarding the legislation and the subsequent changes. Additional training took place during Fall 2021 In-Service, October 6-November 5, 2021. We will continue to train on the legislative changes.



## 6, *continued*

House Bill 1310 mandates that, when possible, officers are required to exhaust available and appropriate de-escalation tactics prior to using any physical force, such as:

- Creating physical distance by employing tactical repositioning and repositioning as often as necessary to maintain the benefit of time, distance, and cover;
- when there are multiple officers, designating one officer to communicate in order to avoid competing commands;
- calling for additional resources such as a crisis intervention team or mental health professional when possible;
- calling for back-up officers when encountering resistance;
- taking as much time as necessary, without using physical force or weapons;

With the expectation of less reliance on use of force and the mandate that officers take all reasonable steps possible to avoid using force, calls require additional officers to handle. Response times to calls has been affected since more officers are needed on many calls to better ensure compliance with these laws. In response to this challenge, SPD leadership is focused on improving the department's staffing. See Goal 7 for recruiting efforts.

**Commitment to Reform:** Over the last decade, SPD has consistently embraced reforms, often initiating the reforms. In the last four years, SPD has made substantial improvements to policies, training, recruiting, and response to crisis calls.

2018
Completes DOJ Collaborative Reform Recommendations
Achieves state reaccreditation
Provides Cultural Sensitivity class to new officers
Begins co-deployed teams of officers and professionals with Frontier Behavioral Health
2019
Recognized by the DOJ COPS Office for successful reform efforts
Works with Police Ombudsman to revise Use of Force Policy and create De-Escalation policy
Bolsters recruiting efforts by reaching out to multiple universities
2020
Forms Regional Behavioral Health Unit with co-deployed officers and mental health professionals
Contracts with Police Strategies, LLC to conduct an independent study on demographic disparities
Forms Bicycle Rapid Response Team
Introduces virtual outreach and recruiting due to COVID-19
2021
Debuts new officer mentoring program
Revises and/or creates 20 policies due to legislation and trains the department
Expands Behavioral Health Unit

## **Develop and retain a qualified, diverse workforce that represents the community in which we live, work and play**

**Recruiting Efforts:** The Spokane Police Department does not have a dedicated “recruiter.” However, the department has officers who assist with recruiting events and conduct recruiting in addition to their regular duties. The department currently strives to build effective communication with local and regional institutions of higher learning to recruit police candidates. Additionally, the department recruits from Fairchild Air Force Base and Joint Base Lewis McCord. SPD attends Public Safety Tests throughout the state to encourage interested police applicants to apply for the Spokane Police Department.

**Personal Approach:** Officer Graig Butler has been pivotal in using his role with Community Outreach in connecting with all segments of our community and pushing our efforts as an agency to diversify our workforce. Officer Butler conducts both in-person and ZOOM calls/meetings with students of the Criminal Justice Program at SCC and WSU. His name, email, and number are posted to the city’s website as the recruiting officer. He regularly receives calls or emails each week from interested entry-level or lateral applicants who have specific questions. He regularly attends Public Safety Test testing dates in Western Washington to recruit entry-level applicants at the test. The pool of candidates testing there is very diverse, more so than in our region. Officer Butler makes concerted efforts to seek out qualified minority and female candidates at these events.

At the Public Safety Tests, Officer Butler has been able to have one-on-one conversations with individual applicants. He offers to meet with them in person or by phone to discuss interview strategies and prepare them to put their best foot forward in the application process. Although SPD is a mid-sized agency, it is still small enough that the department is able to take a human approach to applicants’ backgrounds. SPD hiring staff can take the time to get to know the candidates and evaluate their life experiences.

**Hiring and Recruiting Remains Strong:** In a time when many departments nationwide are struggling to attract applicants, SPD saw a 75% increase in individuals applying for police officer positions compared to 2019 numbers. Focused recruiting efforts have been successful in both increasing the overall number of applicants (762 in 2021) and diversifying the applicant pool. Almost one third of applicants are from groups historically underrepresented in law enforcement (female and minority populations) and more than one third of the 24 police officers hired in 2021 come from those groups. SPD received a grant for 2022 to fund increased and innovative recruiting efforts specifically designed to bolster applicant numbers and further diversify the applicant group.

**Our recruitment efforts have led to a 75% increase of police applicants since 2019**

**Support for Female Officers:** 10% of SPD officers are female, which is close to the national average. In a continued effort to recruit more women, SPD strives to provide superior training and support to its female officers. SPD hosts “Defensive Tactics Training for Female Law Enforcement Officers” at the Spokane Police Academy. SPD is also working to expand female representation in specialty units in the department, including Field Training Officers (FTO), the Hostage Negotiation Team, and the Dignitary Protection Team. SPD is also adding female Defensive Tactics instructors and Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) instructors.

**Retention Rate:** Through an emphasis in mental health and physical wellness, state of the art training, and bringing families into the SPD experience, the Spokane Police Department has a high retention rate for officers. SPD offers a Family Welcome / FAQ / Q&A session with newly hired officers and their families to introduce them into the department and prepare them for the unique career of being in law enforcement. We provide an information pamphlet about the department to both the new hire and the family, as well as books to include Emotional Survival in Law Enforcement and I Love a Cop. Officer mental health is critical, and this class is meant to welcome not only new hires, but their families as well.

**SPD retains 97% of officers who  
complete probation**





## Maintain a progressive approach to best practices revolving around training, equipment, programs and service to the community and our employees

**Exceeding State Training Standards:** Washington State law requires 24 hours of ongoing training for officers each year. SPD holds three (3) mandatory ten-hour In-Service training sessions each year and offers additional training opportunities so that most officers exceed the state requirement. Officers are also required to complete training that is specific to their assignment. For example, Internal Affairs investigators undergo no less than 120 hours of formal training in their first twelve months in the unit. Each year thereafter, each member is required to attend 80 hours of continuing education. We have also formalized our Sergeant in Training and Detective in Training programs.

Mandatory Training for SPD Officers
De-Escalation
Patrol Tactics Model-ALWAYS A.L.E.R.T.
Defensive Tactics Refresher
Reality Based Training Scenarios with Debrief
Recertification on less lethal weapons
Firearms tactical qualification
First Aid / CPR / AED / Blood borne Pathogens / Narcan (opioid overdose medication)
Criminal law and procedures update
Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) Training

Washington State law also mandates a two-hour annual Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) Refresher course for all commissioned officers. SPD meets the state requirement every year, but also exceeds the requirement for crisis intervention training. SPD requires all officers to complete a 40-hour CIT class within a year of graduating from the Academy, in addition to the numerous hours of BLEA training on dealing with persons in crisis.

**Onboarding Training for New Officers:** After recruits graduate from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA), they continue onboarding training with SPD, along with lateral officers who have transferred from another law enforcement agency. Officers complete 80 hours of onboarding training. Topics include courses such as diversity; defensive tactics; less-lethal tool certification; various software training; collision investigation; city geography; report-writing; body cameras; emergency vehicle operation; patrol procedures; domestic violence; search warrants; workplace harassment and municipal codes. One of the courses is a conversation with individuals from underrepresented communities (e.g., Black, Native American, Refugee) in an effort to bridge relationships.

**Enhanced De-Escalation Training:** SPD recently acquired a new VIRTRA system (virtual simulation training) that has greater capabilities than previous versions. Scenarios are much more versatile and there are more options for de-escalation training with the new system.

## 8, *continued*

---

**New Equipment:** SPD recently acquired sufficient pepper ball systems to equip all of patrol with this less-lethal platform. These systems are crucial to fill a gap in response to violent encounters.

Like many other agencies, SPD is not allowing the use of certain other less-lethal launchers until the legislation is changed to no longer prohibit their use. Until needed legislative fixes for critical issues related to detention and use of force can be reached, there is a need for more less-lethal tools. Washington State allotted funds for new less-lethal pepper ball weapons to provide a less lethal option that can quickly incapacitate suspects from a distance. Additionally, these funds were utilized to purchase shields for each patrol car. SPD has also updated TASER weapons.

**Agency Reaccreditation:** The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) Accreditation program reflects the highest professional standards of policing. Accreditation provides a review process for agencies to be certified as operating under industry best practices and standards. SPD has been accredited by WASPC since 2014 and will seek reaccreditation in 2022. SPD staff members are actively involved in the WASPC Accreditation program, serving as Assessors and Mentors for other law enforcement agencies.

**Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) Project:** SPD was selected for the ABLE Project, Georgetown University Law Center's national training and support initiative for U.S. law enforcement agencies committed to building a culture of peer intervention that prevents harm. The Spokane Police Department is in the process of developing instructors for this course who will provide the training to the department in 2022.



## Spokane Police Department Strategic Plan 2022-2023



Public Safety Building  
1100 W. Mallon Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99260

<https://www.facebook.com/SpokanePD>

<https://twitter.com/SpokanePD>

@SpokanePD

*"Serving our community with Integrity,  
Professionalism and Compassion"*