

# SECAUCUS POLICE DEPARTMENT



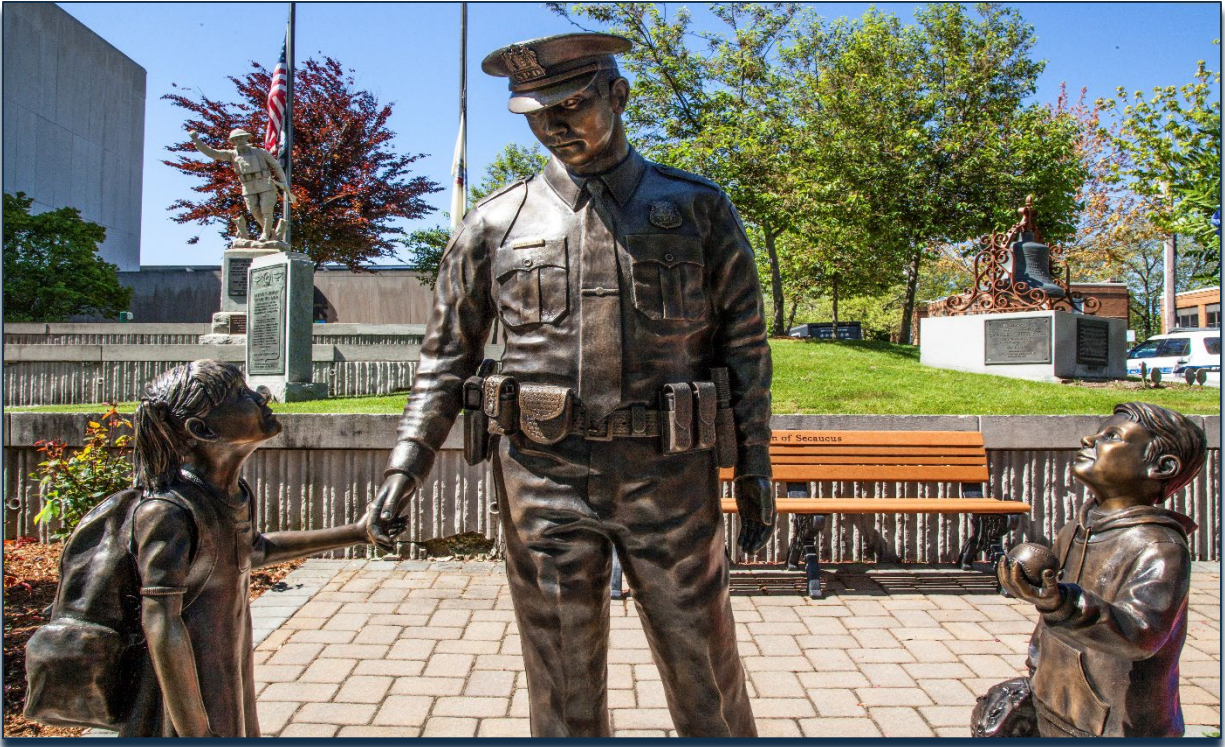
2023  
Annual Report

*DENNIS MILLER*  
*CHIEF OF POLICE*

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# SECAUCUS POLICE DEPARTMENT



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Secaucus Police Department is dedicated to become a union with our community of citizens by demonstrating respect, courtesy and compassion. An ever-present willingness to promote a trusting atmosphere between our police officers and individual citizens, community groups and business associations. These alliances are created through better communication, interacting, listening and responding to our citizens. We strive to build an environment built upon dignity and mutual respect for every individual in our community while remaining accessible to all whom choose to live, work or visit in the Town of Secaucus. At all times we will provide a high level of service consistent with public expectations. We will develop an enhanced quality-of-life through community partnerships involving both the juveniles and adults of this municipality. We choose to go the extra mile to provide special services with a personal touch.

Our core values in pursuit of our mission statement are: Respect, Courtesy and Compassion.



# HIRES, PROMOTIONS, RETIREMENTS

## Promotions

There were no promotions in 2023.

## Retirement

There were no retirements in 2023.

## New Hires



On January 13, 2023 *Austin C. Hawxhurst, Jaden Gonzalez, Andrew Shin and Robert Schaffer* were sworn in as a Probationary Police Officers.





On October 11, 2023 *Jose A. Diaz* was sworn in as a Probationary Police Officer.

# OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE



The Secaucus Police Department is a proactive and community-oriented police department that prides itself on transparency. The Secaucus Police Department's primary function is to prevent and investigate crime, but it performs many more functions. Some of these functions range from traffic safety, school security, counter terrorism, crime prevention and community outreach.

Total calls for service received by the Secaucus Police Department in 2023 were 62,002. We also pride ourselves in having a police department that adequately reflects just about every category of the demographic makeup of the Town.

Although crime rates rise and fall for a myriad of reasons, I credit the proactive and aggressive police work of my officers in keeping these rates low. We also garner information from our State and Federal counterparts to ensure the Secaucus Police

Department possesses the most up-to-date intelligence in our fight against crime. We also have partnered with our Federal Counterparts to prosecute the most violent and/or recidivist offenders, so the maximum penalties are sought.

Throughout 2023 the Secaucus Police Department charged numerous criminals with illegally possessing 13 illegal firearms, respectively, which is a growing problem nationwide. The increase in illegal gun seizures is a testament of our officers' proactive policing efforts.

Our uniformed and plainclothes personnel continue to seize a considerable amount of illegal drugs. All uniformed Secaucus police officers carry the anti-opioid Narcan while on patrol and have saved numerous overdosed victims. In an attempt to counteract drug addiction our police officers continue to provide Law Enforcement Against Drugs (L.E.A.D.) to children in the grammar schools.

Our community outreach efforts have continued in 2023 ranging from events including, but not limited to Community Meetings, Ice Cream with a Cop, Walk to School with a Cop, Skate with a Cop, Chief for a Day, Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out, Blood Drives, Junior Police Academy, Drug Take Back Initiative, et. al. In 2023 the Secaucus Police Department continued to conduct educational outreach programs and engaged our community members that have autism. The Secaucus Police Department also worked with members of the community to keep an "Autism Registry" up to date.

Besides proactively policing and community engagement, the Secaucus Police Department actively addressed a multitude of quality of life issues 2023, including but not limited to

performing 439 welfare checks on residents, enforcing ordinance violations, addressing parking complaints and conducting pedestrian safety decoy operations. The Town of Secaucus has seen an increase non-domicile people on the streets of Secaucus and police officers coordinate with area organizations in an attempt to find them shelter.

I am grateful to Mayor Michael Gonnelli and the Town Council for their continued support in increasing our staffing levels, replacing vacancies of ranking personnel and providing me with the funding needed to continue to provide my officers with the equipment needed to perform their job safely, effectively and efficiently.

The goal in 2024 is to keep crime low and reduce it further where possible. The Secaucus Police Department will continue to come up with proactive initiatives, strategies and approaches to combat crime and engage the community. Additionally, we will continue work in partnership with the community and demonstrate transparency.

Chief Dennis Miller



# OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE



I am honored to help lead the Secaucus Police Department as second in command, instilling that our agency continue its fine law enforcement prestige. The mission of every man and woman that bears the Secaucus Police Department shield is to enforce our laws and serve our community with nothing less than the utmost professionalism and integrity while doing so.

With this administration, the emphasis on community policing has been paramount and each member's commitment to this partnership is second to none. These officers work tirelessly to lower and prevent crime to create a safer environment for our residents, business owners and visitors alike. I look forward to serving our

community alongside the officers of the Secaucus Police Department for projected continued success in 2024 and beyond.

Deputy Chief Joseph Baccola

# ACCREDITATION

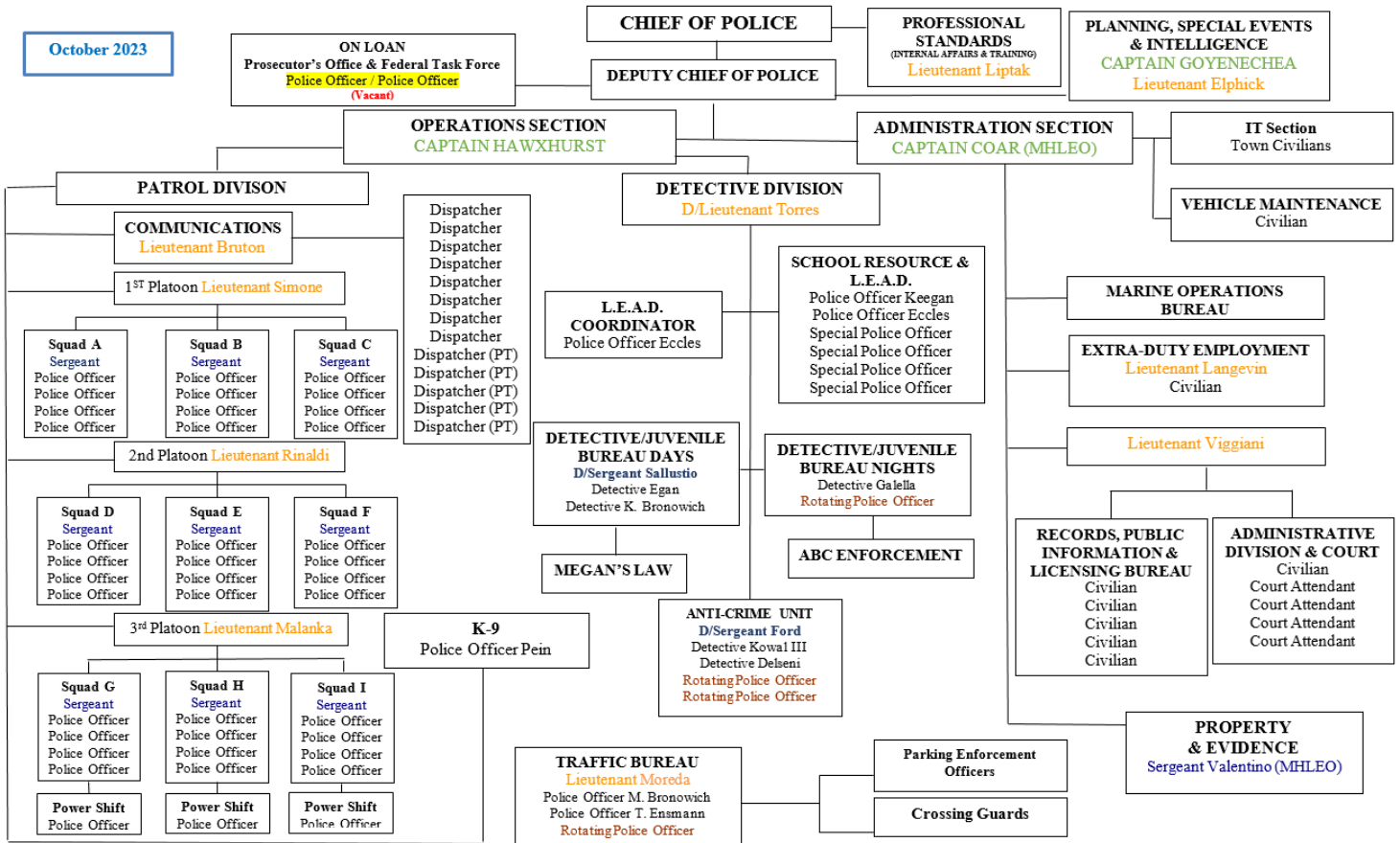


The Secaucus Police Department is an accredited agency by the NJSACOP since 2015. It has been re-accredited in 2018 and 2021, respectively. The Secaucus Police Department Communications Bureau is the first in the State of New Jersey to become an accredited public safety answering point (PSAP) and received that status in 2021.

The Accreditation Manager or Accreditation Team is assigned to the Office of the Chief of Police and has staff and functional authority over all employees of this department in matters pertaining to accreditation, the accreditation process, and subsequent reaccreditation activities. Achieving accreditation involved various studies and surveys to assess a wide range of existing policies, practices, and procedures. Full cooperation with these surveys was mandatory and binding upon all employees of this agency.

The program promotes the best practices in law enforcement.

# FUNCTIONAL CHART





TOWN OF SECAUCUS DEMOGRAPHICS CHART							
Data is based on the 2020 Census Count	POPULATION		CURRENT SWORN OFFICERS TOTAL		CURRENT SWORN OFFICERS FEMALE		
	RACE / ETHNICITY	#	%	#	%	#	%
	WHITE	8,760	39.5%	58	71.60%	4	4.94%
	BLACK or AFRICAN AMERICAN	922	4.15 %	3	3.70%	0	0%
	HISPANIC - ANY RACE	4,700	21.1%	16	19.75%	0	0%
	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	23	0.10%	1	1.23%	0	0
	ASIAN	7,167	32.3%	2	2.47%	0	0%
	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	3	0.01%	0	0.00%	0	0%
	OTHER	632	2.85%	1	1.23%	0	0%
	TOTAL	22,181	100%	81	100%	4	4.94%

Currently have four (4) Special III Police Officers: 2 - Caucasian Males

1 - Hispanic Male

1 - White Female

# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Professional Standards section ensures that the Secaucus Police Department operates in a fair, impartial and professional matter through both training and accountability. The Professional Standards section is commanded by *Lieutenant Christina Liptak*, who reports directly to the Chief of Police.

The Professional Standards section incorporates the Internal Affairs function. It is the policy of the Secaucus Police Department to accept and investigate all complaints of agency employee's alleged misconduct or wrongdoing from any citizen, department employee or any other source, including anonymous sources. Following a thorough and impartial examination of the available factual information, a conclusion will be determined and the employee shall be either exonerated or held responsible for the alleged misconduct. Discipline will be administered according to the degree of misconduct.

Officers and employees, regardless of rank, are subject to disciplinary action for violating their oath and trust. Committing an offense punishable under the laws of the United States, the State of New Jersey, or Municipality constitutes a violation of that oath and trust. Employees are also subject to disciplinary action for the willful or negligent failure to perform the duties of their rank or assignment. In addition, employees may be disciplined for violation of any rule or regulation of the department or for failure to obey any lawful instruction, order, or command of a superior officer or supervisor. Disciplinary action in all matters will be determined based upon the merits of each case.

## Complaints and Internal Affairs Investigations

<b>EXTERNAL</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Citizen Complaint</b>	24	15
<b>Sustained</b>	3	1
<b>Not Sustained</b>	1	1
<b>Unfounded</b>	7	5
<b>Exonerated</b>	10	6
<b>Administratively Closed</b>	3	0
<b>INTERNAL</b>		
<b>Directed Complaint</b>	10	12
<b>Sustained</b>	5	8
<b>Not Sustained</b>	1	0
<b>Unfounded</b>	0	0
<b>Exonerated</b>	1	2
<b>Administratively Closed</b>	3	1
<b>Total</b>	34	27

# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The training of our personnel is one of the most important tasks of the Secaucus Police Department. Professional Standards ensures that members of the Secaucus Police Department receive the most up to date training including, but not limited to police tactics, weapons proficiency, constitutional law, etc. Training is administered by certified departmental instructors.

Additionally, Secaucus Police Officers have instructed various training blocks for the Basic Course for Police Officers at the Hudson County Police Academy, 595 County Avenue, Secaucus, NJ. *Police Officer Taylor Ensmann instructed First Responder and CPR Courses over a five-day period in 2023.*

All sworn members are instructed in *Integrating Communication, Assessment and Tactics (ICAT)* and *Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE)*.

On a semi-annual basis, Secaucus Police Officers and Dispatchers (where applicable) must receive training in Use of Force, Vehicle Pursuit and the TDD/TTY feature of the 9-1-1 phone system. TDD/TTY provides access for persons with speech or hearing impairment to speak with our 9-1-1 call takers.

On an annual basis, police officers and dispatchers (where applicable) receive training in Domestic Violence, Blood-Borne Pathogens, Hazardous Materials Awareness, 9-1-1 Call Taking and Legal Updates. Additionally, on an annual basis, police officers receive training in the Community Law Enforcement Affirmative Relations Continuing Education Courses, pursuant to Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive No. 2016-5, as identified by the Community Law Enforcement Affirmative Relations Institute. Officers also complete training in Prison Rape Elimination Act (P.R.E.A.).

On a biennial basis, police officers and dispatchers receive training in the “Right to Know,” Criminal Justice Information System Training and CPR. Biennially, police officers receive Less Lethal Weapons Training, which is a refresher based training in the use of OC Spray and Baton. In 2023, Secaucus Police Officers completed OC Refresher Training, CPR and Automated License Plate Reader Training.

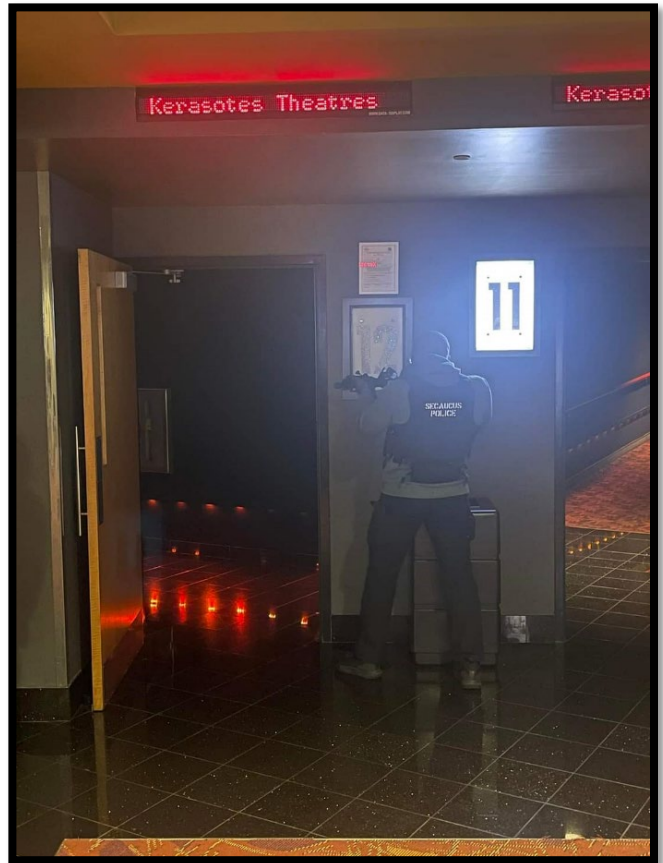
On a triennial basis, police officers and dispatchers receive training in Biased Based Policing, Missing Persons Training and Emotionally Disturbed Persons. Certified police officers are re-certified to operate the radar/laser every three (3) years. Police officers also receive training in Cell Block Management. Also, on a triennial basis, all Secaucus Police personnel, sworn and non-sworn receive training in Harassment in the Workplace and Ethics. In 2023, Secaucus Police Officers completed training in Biased Based Policing, Missing Persons and Emotionally Disturbed Persons.

Professional Standards also ensures that every member of the Secaucus Police Department completes all training mandated by the New Jersey Attorney General’s Office and the Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office. Additionally, Secaucus Police Officers receive practical training in Active Shooter Response several times throughout the year, including training using our Virtual Firearms Training Simulator. In addition to in-service training conducted at the Secaucus Police Department, members of the agency are sent to various police academies or other in person training held by subject matter experts to receive specialized training. In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department sent its members to over 350 in service training courses.

After their initial hiring, Secaucus Police Officers are under the tutelage of *Lieutenant Liptak*, the Field Training Coordinator. The Field Training Coordinator is responsible for the administration,



management, and supervision of the Field Training & Evaluation Program. Five probationary police officers (*Ysandro Santana, Jaden Gonzalez, Austin C. Hawxhurst, Andrew Shin and Robert Schaffer*) graduated from the Field Training & Evaluation Program in 2023.



# HONOR GUARD



## MEMBERS:

*Police Officer Kiril Petrov*  
*Police Officer Tyler Pein*  
*Police Officer Anthony Sherman*  
*Police Officer Jonathan Padron*  
*Police Officer Anthony Burgos*  
*Police Officer Peter Maraldo*  
*Police Officer Michael Borrelli*  
*Police Officer Thomas Hering Jr.*  
*Police Officer Jesus Rodriguez*  
*Police Officer Christopher Carpenter*

In April of 2021, Chief Dennis Miller established an Honor Guard, to promote the professional image of the Secaucus Police Department. The Honor Guard provides funeral honors and serves as the “color guard” by displaying our nation’s flag at various official functions and ceremonial occasions. All members of the Honor Guard are trained as casket guards, pall bearers and color guard.





# SWAT TEAM



If there is a likelihood that the suspects will be armed or may violently resist arrest, a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team is utilized for the operation. It is the policy of the Secaucus Police Department to supply personnel who participate in the Hudson County Regional SWAT Team.

Members of the Secaucus Police Department assigned to the Hudson County Regional SWAT Team fall under the command and control of SWAT Team's chain-of-

command during operational periods. *Police Officer William Kosky, Police Officer Anthony Burgos and Police Officer Dwight Wise* are the Secaucus Police Department personnel assigned to the Hudson County Regional SWAT Team.

Secaucus police officers assigned to the Hudson County Regional SWAT are not authorized to conduct SWAT operations on their own volition and are only authorized to participate in operations/training sessions governed by the Hudson County Regional SWAT team. SWAT team members are placed on standby duty on a rotating schedule.

In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department requested the assistance of the Hudson County Regional SWAT team on 2 occasions. However, assigned Secaucus Police members of the Hudson County Regional SWAT team collectively participated in 21 SWAT operations throughout Hudson County, in 2023.

- ❖ On January 20, 2023 the Secaucus Police Department requested the Hudson County Regional SWAT to make entry for the execution of search warrants at two locations in Union City. The search warrants derived from a cargo theft investigation from 80 Enterprise Avenue.
- ❖ On June 3, 2023 at 7:58 P.M., the Secaucus Police Department received a 9-1-1 call from a resident of The Harper, 100 Park Plaza Drive. The caller reported that her fiancée, a 29-year-old male of Secaucus, was making irrational statements. A subsequent phone call was merged between the caller, the caller's fiancée and Secaucus Police Department 9-1-1 operator. During that phone call, the male made homicidal statements. Secaucus Police Officers were dispatched to the residence to check on the male's well-being. Upon their knock on the apartment door they were denied entry and the police officers were threatened to be harmed. It was further confirmed that the male was alone in the apartment with an Australian Sheppard dog. Residents in the immediate area of the subject apartment were evacuated for their safety and the Hudson County Regional SWAT Team was activated along with a screener from the "Mobile Psychological Crisis Unit," based out of the Jersey City Medical Center. Over more than a seven-hour period, numerous attempts, through a variety of means, were made to negotiate with this male to no avail. At 2:18 A.M., members of the Hudson County Regional SWAT Team made entry into the apartment and took the male into custody. Upon entry, it was discovered that at some point during the standoff, prior to law enforcement's entry, this male killed the Australian Sheppard.



# ADMINISTRATION SECTION RECORDS, PUBLIC INFORMATION AND LICENSING BUREAU

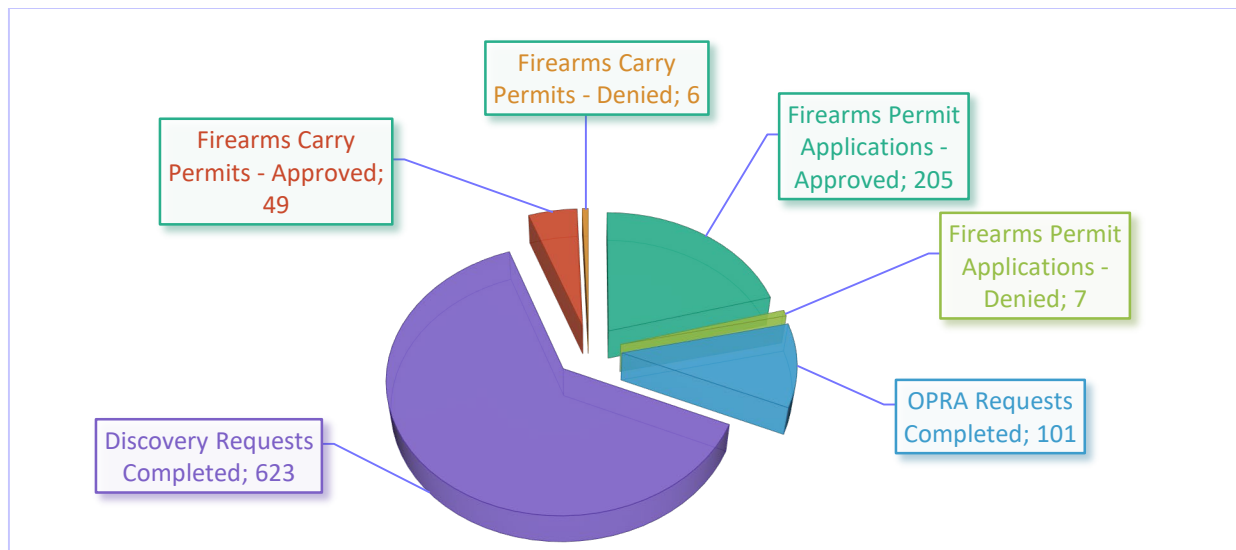
The Administration Section of the Secaucus Police Department incorporates the Records, Public Information and Licensing Bureau, Property and Evidence function, Extra-Duty Employment and acts as the liaison to the Court. The Administration Section is commanded by *Captain Scott Coar*.

This Records, Public Information and Licensing Bureau consists of five (5) full-time civilians and is supervised by *Lieutenant Michael Viggiani*. It is the responsibility of the Records Bureau to classify reports, maintain an information database, submit reports and digital evidence to State and Federal Agencies, answer requests for Discovery, process Firearms Purchase Identification Cards, Permits to Purchase Handguns along with Permits to Carry Handguns, as well as other administrative functions. This bureau is responsible to classify crime data and submit daily reports to the National Incident-Based Reporting System [N.I.B.R.S.], which is managed by the F.B.I.

Each year the Records, Public Information and Licensing Bureau handles thousands of requests made by telephone, walk-in and email for incident and arrest reports and general information. This bureau also fulfills Open Public Records Act (O.P.R.A.) requests and expungement orders, relating to the Secaucus Police Department. The Records, Public Information and Licensing Bureau prepares and distributes news releases from the department.

In 2023, the Records Bureau added a non-criminal property damage form to our online reporting. After heavy rain or high wind storms our police officers respond to numerous non-emergent calls for service to simply take a police report for damaged property, which are solely used for insurance purposes. For the convenience of our residents, and to reduce the number of calls our officers will have to physically take after a storm event. We will only be using them after a storm event to limit the surge in service calls.

This Records, Public Information and Licensing Bureau generates revenue through accident report requests, firearm application fees and attorney discovery requests, which are deposited in the Town's Miscellaneous Revenue Account.



## CRIME DATA

	2022	2023
Homicide/Murder	0	0
Arson	0	0
Sexual Assault (All Types)	10	7
Robbery (All Types)	21	13
Aggravated Assault (All Types)	25	22
Burglary	121	112
Theft (Except Motor Vehicles)	311	288
Theft (Motor Vehicle)	26	39
Drug Arrests	61	67
Domestic Violence Investigations	201	145
Prostitution Arrests	26	15
DWI Arrests	44	49
Total Agency Custodial Arrests	638	603
Total CAD Numbers	62,877	62,002

## COURT STATISTICS

	2022	2023
<b>Criminal Complaints</b>	493	465
<b>Summonses</b>	14,618	14,343

## USE OF FORCE

	2022	2023
Firearm	0	0
Baton	2	2
OC	1	1
Canine Physical Contact	0	0
Weaponless Physical Force	20	25
Total Use of Force Arrests	16	18
Complaints	0	1
Total Agency Custodial Arrests	638	603

## VEHICLE PURSUITS

	2022	2023
Total Pursuits	5	8
Terminated by Agency	3	5
Policy Compliant	4	7
Policy Non-Compliant	1	1
Crashes	1	1
Injuries: Officer	0	0
: Suspects	1	1
: Third Party	0	0
Traffic Offense	2	1
Crime	3	7
Disorderly or Petty Disorderly Persons	0	0

# ADMINISTRATION SECTION

## PROPERTY & EVIDENCE

The utilization of proper and accepted methods for the collection, packaging, storage and preservation of all evidence and seized property is of paramount importance in the successful investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. The lawful and appropriate disposition of such property at regular intervals is necessary for the efficient management of the property and evidence function.

The Property and Evidence function of the Secaucus Police Department is run by *Sergeant Mark Valentino*. *Sergeant Valentino* liaisons with laboratories of the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office and the New Jersey State Police to facilitate the examination of certain evidence. In 2023, we took possession of 54 guns, but most notably 13 of them were illegally possessed firearms that were seized by members of the Secaucus Police Department.

The Property and Evidence function is responsible for the auctioning of abandoned vehicles that were lawfully impounded by the Secaucus Police Department. In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department auctioned a total of fifty-six (56) cars, which were prepared, listed and sold on *govdeals.com*. After paying the required storage fees incurred, \$80,669.64 was profited and delivered into the Town's Miscellaneous Revenue Account.

The Property and Evidence Custodian also oversees our "*Drug Take Back Initiative*" held several times a year in collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Administration along with the "*American Medicine Chest Challenge*." Both of these programs give residents the ability to dispose of their unused and/or unwanted prescriptions safely and keep them out of the hands of others. The Secaucus Police Property Custodian collaborates with the Secaucus Drug Free Coalition to make these programs a success. In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department disposed of 415 pounds of prescription medicine on behalf of the Town's residents.



## ADMINISTRATION SECTION EXTRA-DUTY EMPLOYMENT

The Town of Secaucus allows officers to engage in extra-duty employment on a voluntary basis. In order to ensure that extra-duty employment assignments are administered and conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, ordinances, written directives and prevailing opinions (Attorney General, Selection of Pensions, Department of Labor, etc.), the Chief of Police has designated *Lieutenant Scott Langevin* to act as the Extra Duty Employment Coordinator for extra-duty employment assignments. Additionally, there is a civilian employee assigned to handle all administrative billing in regards to these extra-duty details. In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department billed \$1,344,526.54 for officers, police car rental fees and administrative fees.



*Lieutenant Scott Langevin* is a certified motorcycle instructor and coordinates our “Motor Officer,” program. *Sergeant Daniel Dobosz* and *Police Officer Thomas Keegan* are also certified motorcycle operator instructors. All motorcycle certified officers received 80 hours of training based on the *Northwestern* or *TEEX* University curriculum. Currently, *Captain Scott Coar*, *Sergeant Reinaldo Cruzado*, *Sergeant Daniel Dobosz*, *Sergeant Chester Dobosz*, *Police Officer Thomas Keegan* and *Police Officer Joseph Fuardo* are all certified motorcycle officers.

Motorcycles are not utilized for regular patrol duties, but are used during community policing activities, parades and funeral escorts. At the request of Secaucus residents, 48 funeral escorts were performed by the Secaucus Police Department in 2023.

The Secaucus Police Department sponsored a *Basic Motorcycle Instructor and Operator Course* from April 3-21, 2023, which was instructed by *TEEX*. The Secaucus Police Department hosted a Basic Motorcycle Operator Course from October 30 – November 10, 2023, whereby members of the Secaucus, Bayonne and Union City Police Departments and Hudson County Sheriff’s Department attended.





# ADMINISTRATION SECTION

## MARINE OPERATIONS BUREAU



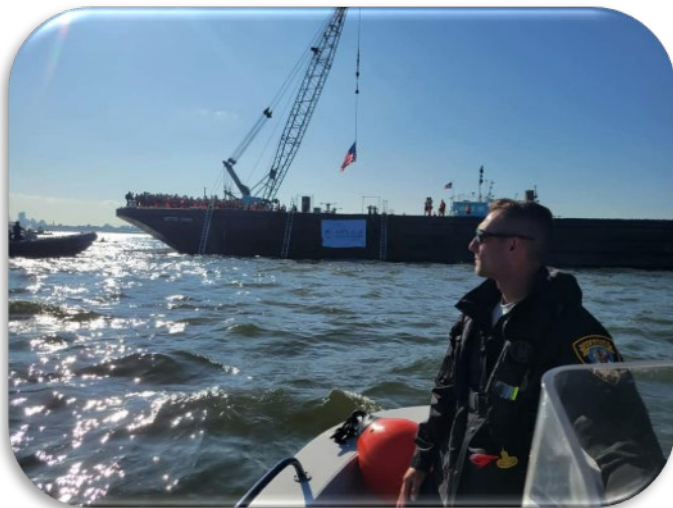
Due to an increase of watercraft on the Hackensack River, the Secaucus Police Department created the Marine Operations Bureau in 2023, to provide law enforcement service for the Secaucus waterways and to ensure the boating public receives safe, efficient and professional service. The 18 foot Boston Whaler was given to the Secaucus Police Department from the Palisades Interstate Police Department and restored to its current condition. The Marine Operations Bureau is commanded by *Captain Scott Coar*.

Although the Marine Operations Bureau will not be on the water 24/7, members of the Marine Operations Bureau can launch the Secaucus Police Department vessel to respond to an emergency on a Secaucus waterway. The Marine Operations Bureau has also joined the fire/police boat task force, overseen by the *United States Coast Guard*.

Every member assigned to the Marine Operations Bureau, regardless of their duties, are required to attend and complete a basic boating course given by the *United States Coast Guard*. Every member assigned to the Marine Operations Bureau, regardless of their duties, are required to attend and complete a course that meets the NASBLA Boat Program Standards. The course will provide instruction in basic marine law (Rules of the Road), *N.J.S.A. 12:7 et. seq.*, *N.J.A.C. 13:82 et. seq.*, federal carriage requirements (personal flotation devices, fire extinguisher, lights, etc.), vessel handling (theory and practical), vessel boarding procedures, towing procedures, vessel care, seamanship (knots and

splices), licensing and certification requirements, nautical terminology, open water rescue and survival (theory and practical) and basic navigation (navigational chart familiarization and operation of GPS).





- ❖ On August 19, 2023 *Sergeant Aniello Schaffer* and *Police Officer Christopher Carpenter* on board Marine 1 assisted the New Jersey State Police and NYPD in providing security on the Hudson River while Navy Seals took to the water for their annual charitable swim.
- ❖ On December 9, 2023 a fisherman discovered a lifeless body in the Hackensack River underneath the eastern spur of the New Jersey Turnpike. The Secaucus Police and Fire Marine Units were dispatched to the scene, along with Marine assets from Lyndhurst, Wallington and Kearny Fire Departments. The Secaucus Police Drone was launched and confirmed a body was caught on the support pillar. Dive teams from Lyndhurst and Wallington entered the water and the body was removed and taken to shore. During a visual examination of the decomposing body, it appears at this time, the unidentified adult male suffered gunshot wounds to his chest and face area. Secaucus Police assisted the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office in identifying who the person is, but the Homicide Unit was the lead investigative agency.

# OPERATIONS SECTION

## PATROL DIVISION

The Operations Section of the Secaucus Police Department incorporates the Patrol Division, Detective Division, Anti-Crime Unit, Communications, Canine Unit and Traffic Bureau. The Operations Section is commanded by *Captain Austin Hawxhurst*.

The Patrol Division is broken into three platoons and each platoon is commanded by a Lieutenant, *Lieutenant Michael Simone*, *Lieutenant Thomas Malanka Jr.* and *Lieutenant Christopher Rinaldi*. Each of the three platoons consist of three squads, while a squad consists of one sergeant and four police officers each. Two squads work a shift simultaneously. Six of the nine squads rotate between the day and evening tours tri-weekly, while three squads maintain their steady assignment to the night tour. A police officer from the patrol division is assigned to a rotating position within the Detective Division, Anti-Crime Unit and Traffic Bureau once each calendar quarter. This quarterly rotation provides our patrol officers with further training and gives them the opportunity to perform a different aspect of policing, while enhancing the overall performance of the Secaucus Police Department.

The Patrol Division is the largest and most visible Division of the Secaucus Police Department. The Patrol Division is the first to respond to police, fire, and medical emergencies and non-emergencies within the 6.6 square mile town, twenty-four (24) hours a day seven (7) days a week. Officers in this division also enforce motor vehicle laws, apprehend criminals and investigate suspicious incidents. Specially trained members of the Patrol Division utilize bicycles and a Segway to patrol special events and provide a more mobile and visible police presence.

Patrol Division officers conduct “park and walks,” whereby they park their vehicle and walk around local business areas such as the “Plaza” and Harmon Meadow Shopping Complex, senior citizen housing buildings along with local parks and hotels that are known for criminal activity. During these “park and walks” officers engage members of the public and business owners to promote a dialogue and/or listen to their concerns. In 2023, 2,518 “park and walks” were conducted at various times during each day and night.





## **SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES OF THE PATROL DIVISION IN 2023**

- ❖ The Secaucus Police Department administers Nasal Narcan to treat opioid overdoses and minimize overdoses caused by opioids. It is the policy of the Secaucus Police Department for trained officers to administer Nasal Narcan to persons suffering from opioid overdoses at the earliest possible time to minimize overdosing, in accordance with law. In 2023, officers responded to 2 Fatal Overdoses and 58 Non-Fatal Overdoses. Patrol Division officers administered Nasal Narcan on 9 occasions in 2023.
- ❖ On January 24, 2023 at 4:45 P.M., the Secaucus Police Department responded to the area of Seaview Drive and New County Road on a report of an unresponsive male who was not breathing. Upon his arrival, *Lieutenant Christopher Rinaldi* found the victim not breathing and no pulse could be found. *Lieutenant Rinaldi* began Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). At this time, *Police Officers Mikhail Kowlessar* and *Kasey Kelly* arrived and assisted with CPR. While performing CPR, the officers utilized their Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and administered one “shock” to the victim and a pulse was found shortly thereafter by Hudson Regional Hospital EMT’s who also arrived on the scene. The victim was transported to the hospital and was in stable condition in the Intensive Care Unit.
- ❖ On February 11, 2023 at 8:05 P.M., a victim, of Secaucus, came to the Secaucus Police Department to apply for a Temporary Restraining Order against her ex-boyfriend, who resides in Edgewater. During the investigation a search warrant was issued for his Edgewater residence, since it was believed by the victim that he possessed a handgun. During a search, *Police Officer Salvatore Manente* located a loaded .38 caliber handgun. The man was arrested and charged with unlawfully possessing the handgun, but also Certain Persons not to Possess Firearms [2C:39-7], due to him being a convicted felon.
- ❖ On February 17, 2023 at 8:04 P.M. Secaucus Police responded to the area of 100 Enterprise Avenue on report of a suspicious person on the property, which was closed and not open to the public at this time of night. Police Officers from the Patrol Division and Detectives from the Anti-Crime Unit responded to the area and were directed by the reporting party to a man, later identified as an East Orange resident, who was wearing a ski mask. The man was now in the area 115 Enterprise Avenue and observed entering a white Kia Optima. Detectives attempted to stop him, but he disregarded their attempt and fled the area on foot. After a brief foot pursuit, officers and detectives struggled to get control of this man as he was trying to get his into his pockets, but he was ultimately placed under arrest. During a search of his person a loaded .25 caliber Tangoglio Giuseppe Model GT26 semi-automatic handgun was found in his jacket pocket. A further search of his person revealed two knives and a variety of tools, often used during the commission of a burglary. The investigation revealed that this man burglarized a tractor trailer on the property of 100 Enterprise Avenue. Also, it was discovered that the 2016 Kia Optima that the man was inside of was reported stolen from a Nutley Kia dealership.

- ❖ On February 19, 2023 at 3:36 A.M., Secaucus Police were notified that the North Bergen Police Department were looking for a white Range Rover that was involved in a burglary within their jurisdiction and fled toward Secaucus. *Sergeant Aniello Schaffer* located the vehicle and attempted to stop it, but the vehicle fled. Due to the manner the vehicle was driving before the attempt to stop, a vehicular pursuit was initiated. During an attempt to “box in” the vehicle it struck one of the Secaucus Police patrol vehicles and the pursuit was terminated. The vehicle, which was later discovered to be stolen, fled on Windsor Drive toward the dead end and all of the occupants fled on foot. *Police Officer Dwight Wise* was able to apprehend the driver of the stolen vehicle. The other occupants of the vehicle remain at large, despite a search of the area by the Secaucus Police K-9 Unit. The driver was charged accordingly and turned over to the North Bergen Police Department.
  
- ❖ On February 25, 2023 a theft was committed at the Calvin Klein Store at 30 Enterprise Avenue. Two males and one female fled in their vehicle onto Meadowlands Parkway. Officers ultimately stopped the vehicle on the 3 East ramp from Meadowlands Parkway where all three occupants fled the vehicle. One male ran west in the eastbound lanes of Route 3 toward East Rutherford who was arrested after a follow-up investigation conducted by the Detective Division. The female was taken into custody a short distance from the vehicle. The other male ran down the Route 3 East embankment through the 9th Street Park and was observed by residents in the backyards of residences on 9th Street. A perimeter was established and a “shelter in place” was called. We also used our social media to relay the shelter in place. After a search of the backyards with *K-9 Brix*, the male was taken into custody after he was found hiding on the back deck of 773 9th Street. Stolen property was recovered within the vehicle.
  
- ❖ On April 4, 2023 *Captains Austin Hawxhurst* and *Carlos Goyenechea* were involved in a motor vehicle pursuit. The operator was fleeing police and driving in a manner likely to endanger others and drove his vehicle through a park and down an embankment into the Hackensack River. The suspect used a socket wrench to break out the driver’s side window so he could exit the vehicle. As he was climbing out of the vehicle he held up the socket wrench, which was approximately one foot in length, and pointed it towards the police, despite being told to keep his hands up. At this time *Captain Goyenechea* utilized OC and gave a short burst toward the suspect, who was still refusing to comply with verbal commands. From his vantage point *Captain Goyenechea* could not see if the suspect could gain his footing and could possible charge at them with the wrench. The suspect entered the Hackensack River in an attempt to swim across to evade capture. For over one hour officers negotiated with the suspect to peacefully surrender. At certain points during the approximate 1.5-hour ordeal the suspect attempted to swim across the Hackensack River where the current could have drowned him, he armed himself with a large stick and swung it at officers, he requested to be shot and killed by officers, he stated he “killed” someone, he tied his shirt around his neck in an attempt to choke himself and he was clearly hallucinating. Throughout the duration of the encounter, officers utilized tactical positioning and repositioning along with time to negotiate with the suspect. However, after approximately almost 1.5 hours the suspect still posed a danger to himself by being next to the water’s edge and quick sinking mud that posed a danger to himself and the officers deployed near the water’s edge. After being coaxed by the negotiator to move closer to dryer land, which was a safer position to take him to the ground, physical force in the form of a takedown was utilized to end the standoff.



*Captain Goyenechea, D/Sergeant Giacomo Sallustio and Police Officers Taylor Ensmann and Jay Valerio* took the suspect to the ground and handcuffed him, thereby ending the standoff.

- ❖ On April 9, 2023 at 8:42 P.M., the Secaucus Police responded to the Aloft Hotel, 460 Harmon Meadow Boulevard on a woman calling for help. Initial responding police officers located a woman in the lobby of the hotel bleeding from the hand. The female stated that she met a man at the hotel with the purpose of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for money. Upon asking the man to leave the room he brandished a knife and demanded his money back. When she refused, he lunged at her. During a struggle the woman received a laceration to her finger and buttocks. The man attempted to prevent her from leaving the room, but he was unsuccessful and the woman made her way to the hallway while yelling for help. The woman was treated for injuries at the scene. Police Officers located the man in the lobby of the hotel with blood on his jacket and foot. He also was found in possession of a bloody knife used in the assault. He was subsequently placed under arrest.
- ❖ On April 24, 2023 at 7:34 A.M. Secaucus *Police Officer Kasey Kelly* was patrolling the area of the Red Roof Inn, 15 Meadowland Parkway. While on patrol, he randomly accessed the registration of an unoccupied Kia Forte that was parked, but running in the parking lot. The vehicle was discovered to be stolen from Newark on April 23, 2023. An on-scene investigation was conducted and the driver of the vehicle, a Glassboro resident, was located in one of the motel rooms and was placed under arrest. During a search of her jacket she was found in possession of several 9mm handgun bullets.
- ❖ On May 3, 2023 at 12:32 A.M., Secaucus *Police Officers Justin Machno and Jaden Gonzalez* were on patrol in the area of Meadowlands Parkway and Route 3 West, when they observed a white 2014 Dodge Durango travelling at a high rate of speed. A check of the registration revealed the vehicle was stolen from Weehawken on May 2, 2023. The officers attempted to stop the stolen vehicle, however the vehicle eluded police and drove onto Route 3 West at speeds in excess of 80 miles per hour. The Secaucus Police Officers pursued the stolen vehicle onto 120 North and onto Washington Avenue. The pursuit continued through Moonachie and into Little Ferry. Secaucus Police Officers briefly lost sight of the stolen Dodge Durango around a curve, but moments later they located the vehicle after it crashed into a tree in the area of 31 Liberty Street in Little Ferry. All of the occupants of the stolen vehicle exited the vehicle and attempted to flee, however they were all arrested, immediately thereafter. One of the occupants was located by the Little Ferry Police K-9 hiding behind a shed. The occupants were identified as two seventeen (17) males and one sixteen (16) year old male, all from Jersey City.
- ❖ On June 9, 2023 at 5:03 A.M., *Police Officer Jason Mitchell* observed a black-colored Kia Forte come off the Maple Street Ramp from Route 3 West turn onto Radio Avenue. The vehicle had no lights on and the four occupants were wearing black ski masks. While awaiting other police units to get in position to make a safe stop of the vehicle, to alleviate having a vehicular pursuit, *Police Officer Mitchell* surveilled the vehicle to the area of Millridge Road. The vehicle then travelled toward Paterson Plank Road from Hops Lane where an attempt was made to stop it. The vehicle refused to stop and accelerated onto Paterson Plank Road and attempted to go around multiple police vehicles in the area of 1536 Paterson Plank Road. At this time, the Kia Forte lost control on the property of Hillcrest, striking an unmarked police vehicle. After crashing the

vehicle, all four occupants fled on foot. With the assistance of the Little Ferry Police K-9, a 14-year-old male, of Newark, was arrested after he was found hiding in the yard of a Fischer Avenue residence. At the time of his arrest the 14-year-old was found in possession of credit cards belonging to other people. A 16-year-old male, of Newark, was apprehended by Secaucus Police in the yard of a Hagan Place residence. The 16-year-old male had a large screwdriver in his possession at the time of his arrest. Secaucus Police Officers pursued the driver of the vehicle, a 17-year-old male, of Newark and a fourth unidentified male onto Fairview Avenue, where the 17-year-old male was tackled to the ground and arrested. An exhaustive search was conducted for the fourth male suspect to no avail. The Kia Forte had its ignition punched and was confirmed to have been stolen from Irvington earlier in that morning. A knife and a window glass punch, presumably to be used as burglar tools, were found inside the stolen vehicle.

- ❖ On August 13, 2023 at 11:35 A.M. Secaucus *Police Officer Jaden Gonzalez* was patrolling the area near Red Roof Inn, 15 Meadowlands Parkway, where he observed an occupied black Chevrolet Equinox stationary in the parking lot for an extended period of time, idling. After a brief discussion with the occupants, *Police Officer Gonzalez* became aware that a female of Richmond, KY possessed a handgun within the vehicle. During a search of the vehicle, a .38 caliber Smith and Wesson revolver was seized along with some handgun ammunition. She was arrested and charged with Unlawful Possession of a Handgun [2C:39-5b(1)]. She was released by the Court pursuant to Criminal Justice Reform, pending her appearance in Court.
- ❖ On October 24, 2023 at 8:02 P.M., *Police Officer Justin Machno*, while on the Power Shift, was patrolling the area of the Extended Stay Hotel, 1 Meadowland Parkway. While on patrol, he observed an occupied Chevy pickup idling in the parking lot. After discovering the pickup truck had been reported stolen earlier in the day from Warwick, RI, a male from Providence, Rhode Island was placed under arrest.
- ❖ On October 27, 2023, at approximately 6:00 P.M., *Police Officer Joseph Fuardo* and *Police Officer Eric Munive* were transporting someone from Secaucus to Jersey City. While traveling on the ramp from 1&9 North to Secaucus Road, *Police Officer Fuardo* observed a fight in Travel Lodge on Tonnelles Avenue, in Jersey City. *Police Officer Fuardo* observed one of the combatants bleeding from an apparent stab wound to his stomach/sternum area. Upon stopping and intervening the other combatant fled into a motel room. While *Police Officer Munive* provided first aid to the stab victim, *Police Officer Fuardo* kept the assailant, who retreated into a hotel room, at bay. Upon the arrival of additional Secaucus Police Officers and Jersey City Police Officers, the suspect was taken into custody and charged by the Jersey City Police Department and the victim was transported to a local hospital.
- ❖ On October 27, 2023, at approximately 7:40 P.M., while traveling north on County Avenue in the area of 493 County Avenue, *Police Officer Joseph Fuardo* observed a grey colored Honda CRV with its lights off and failing to maintain its lane. A check of the license plate revealed the vehicle was reported stolen from Paterson. A 24-year-old female from Paterson was arrested and charged with Receiving a Stolen Vehicle [2C:20-10.2].
- ❖ On November 6, 2023 at 1:03 P.M., the Secaucus Police Department responded to the Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital, 595 County Avenue, on a report of an unresponsive female

staff member, who was not breathing. Upon their arrival, *Police Officers Nicholas Spangenberg and Kasey Kelly* discovered the victim not breathing and no pulse could be found. The officers began Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). While performing CPR, the officers utilized their Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and administered one “shock” to the victim and a pulse was found shortly thereafter. Hudson Regional Hospital EMT’s who arrived on the scene, immediately transported the victim, but also administered a “shock” to her onboard the ambulance. The victim was transported to the Hudson Regional Hospital, stabilized and transferred to Englewood Hospital for immediate cardiac care.

- ❖ On November 14, 2023, *Police Officers Justin Machno and Kiril Petrov*, who are assigned to the “Power Shift,” were on patrol in the area of 700 Plaza Drive. At approximately 8:23 P.M., *Police Officer Machno* observed a male improperly park his 2009 Acura TL. Furthermore, the license plate affixed to the vehicle was “not on file.” While *Police Officer Machno* was addressing the parking violation, the driver returned, but denied any knowledge of the vehicle, despite being observed exiting the vehicle by the officer a short time earlier. While speaking with him, *Police Officers Machno and Petrov* developed suspicion that criminal activity was afoot and summoned Secaucus Police *K-9 Brix* to the scene. Upon his arrival, *K-9 Brix* conducted an open air sniff of the vehicle and indicated that narcotics were present within. During a search of the Acura, over 1,800 pills of suspected ecstasy along with over 4.5 ounces of suspected cocaine were seized. Additionally, a North Carolina license plate that was reported stolen was found within the vehicle. A male, 29, of New York, NY was placed under arrest.
- ❖ On December 16, 2023 at 10:03 A.M., the Secaucus Police Department responded to LA Fitness, 485 Harmon Meadow Boulevard, on a report of an unresponsive male, who was not breathing. A witness to the event, immediately began Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Upon their arrival, *Police Officer Christopher Boyko* took over CPR and was later assisted by *Police Officer Jonathan Padron*. While performing CPR, *Police Officer Justin Pardo* utilized his Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and administered two “shocks” to the victim and a pulse was found shortly thereafter. Hudson Regional Hospital EMT’s and Jersey City Medical Center Paramedics, who both arrived on the scene, took over CPR and later administered two additional “shocks” to the victim. The victim was transported to Hudson Regional Hospital, stabilized and later transferred to Hackensack University Medical Center for immediate cardiac care. The victim remains in stable condition in the Intensive Care Unit.

## OPERATIONS SECTION

### CANINE UNIT

Canine Handler, *Police Officer Tyler Pein* and *Brix* have undergone twenty-nine weeks of vigorous training at the Bergen County Sheriff's Canine Academy, which culminated on April 14, 2023. This Secaucus Police Canine Patrol Team have been trained in agility, obedience, article/evidence searches, scent work, criminal apprehension and handler protection. *Brix* has also been trained to detect various controlled dangerous substances, with the exception of marijuana.

The Canine Unit assists the Secaucus Police Department in furthering proactive policing. *Brix* is also utilized for community demonstrations, in hopes of enhancing our community policing efforts.



The Secaucus Police Canine Unit has been deployed on 12 occasions in Secaucus for patrol related activities in 2023.

Canine *Brix* conducted 130 “open air sniffs” for narcotics in 2023.



# OPERATIONS SECTION

## TRAFFIC BUREAU

The Secaucus Police Department's Traffic Bureau is commanded by *Lieutenant Martin Moreda*, an Accredited Traffic Accident Reconstructionist (ACTAR). Two police officers (*Michael Bronowich and Taylor Ensmann*) are assigned to the Traffic Bureau on a full-time basis, while a third police officer from the Patrol Division rotates into the Traffic Bureau on a quarterly basis. In 2023, *Police Officers Dillon Genatt, William Smith, Justin Machno and Matthew Cutola* spent one calendar quarter assigned to the Traffic Bureau. All full-time police officers receive specialized training in crash investigation, et. al. and they all are assigned as "crash investigators" with the Hudson County Regional Fatal Crash Unit. Crash investigators rotate being "on-call" for both the Secaucus Police Department and the County Regional Crash Unit to ensure there are investigators to process crash scenes 24 hours per day/7 days per week.

The Secaucus Police Department's Traffic Bureau utilizes state of the art equipment such as speed laser/radar enforcement, electronic data mapping instruments and electronic speed and volume counters to continue improving the safe and effective flow of motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic on our public roadways. The Traffic Bureau is responsible for investigating motor vehicle crashes with the potential for serious bodily injury and/or death. Traffic crash analysis is conducted to identify the problem roadways and causes to help reduce the total number of crashes per year.

The Traffic Bureau oversees the administration of several traffic enforcement grants. In April of 2023, the Secaucus Police Department received a \$7,000.00 grant for 100 hours of Distracted Driving Enforcement. During that enforcement campaign [April 1-30, 2023], 153 motorists were stopped and 111 summonses were issued. A \$7,000.00 grant was received for Click it or Ticket campaign [May 22 – June 4, 2023], whereby 152 motorists were stopped and 128 summonses were issued. A \$7,000.00 grant was received for the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign [December 2, 2023 – January 1, 2024], whereby 163 motorists were stopped, 2 arrests were made for DWI along with one for an active warrant and 43 summonses were issued.

The Traffic Bureau handles complaints and performs traffic studies to identify roadway deficiencies and determine a possible solution to help increase the efficiency and safety of both public and private roadways. Street signs and lane markings are inspected to ensure compliance with the New Jersey State Department of Transportation regulations.

The Drug Recognition Expert course is a total of 16 days (80 hours) in classroom instruction consisting of Phase I and Phase II with a comprehensive exam at the end of Phase II. Phase III consists of 3 days of field evaluations. Six field evaluations conducted and witnessing six other field evaluations with twelve total evaluations. In 2022, the Secaucus Police Department joined a grant with Hudson County. The grant reimburses Secaucus with payment of \$60.00 per hour for overtime that was incurred by the DRE. The grant also reimburses the Secaucus Police Department four (4) hours if the officer has to appear in court. *Police Officer Kiril Petrov* is currently the Secaucus Police Department's only DRE. He participates in Hudson County's on-call DRE program, which makes available a DRE to the Secaucus Police Department on a 24/7 basis. In 2023, *Police Officer Petrov* was called out 4 times.

# OPERATIONS SECTION

## TRAFFIC BUREAU

The Traffic Bureau is responsible for parking enforcement throughout The Town of Secaucus. Nine (9) Parking Enforcement Officers (3-full time/6-part time) ensure that drivers are parking safely both on the roadway and on private property. In 2023, Parking Enforcement Officers issued 9,568 summonses.

The Traffic Bureau regulates, trains and evaluate the thirty-two (32) crossing guards for the Town of Secaucus to provide a safe passage for our school children. School routes are routinely monitored to ensure that the crossing guard posts are safe and practical.

To promote child safety, certified child seat installation technicians from the Traffic Bureau, inspect and install child safety seats within residents' vehicles. In 2023, 21 child safety seats were installed by certified Secaucus Police Department Personnel. On September 17, 2023 the Traffic Bureau hosted a child car seat inspection event in the Kohl's Parking Lot.

The Traffic Bureau's main goal is to keep the roadways and children safe and to reduce the number of serious crashes by providing education, engineering and enforcement within our community.

- ❖ On November 11, 2022, The Secaucus Police Department responded to Route 3 East on a report of an overturned dump truck along the service road. Responding units observed a dump truck owned by Jhonatan Trucking, LLC on its side in front of Bareli's Restaurant with gravel spilled into the parking lot. Four additional vehicles were involved, including a 2006 Honda Accord, which was found disabled across the main roadway of Route 3 East. The driver of the Honda, was evaluated by EMS on scene for minor injuries. While at the scene, he exhibited signs of intoxication prompting a search warrant for blood. It was later determined that the driver of the Honda was operating his motor vehicle with a blood alcohol content over the legal limit. The driver of the Honda, initially traveling along Plaza Center Road in Secaucus, lost control of his vehicle and crashed into the curb(s) of Route 3 East causing his vehicle to become disabled across the three left lanes. The Secaucus Police Department Traffic Bureau charged a 26-year-old male of Bogota on Tuesday, January 23, 2023, for causing a five-car motor vehicle accident resulting in injuries to two people.
- ❖ On January 26, 2023 at approximately 6:40 a.m., the Secaucus Police Department was notified of a pedestrian struck in the area of Paul Amico Way and New County Road. A Secaucus Police Lieutenant was in the direct area of the crash and rendered aid to the female pedestrian. The striking vehicle did not remain at the scene. The victim, later identified as a 49-year-old Jersey City woman, was transported by Emergency Medical Services to Jersey City Medical Center where she was treated for her injuries. During the initial investigation, the vehicle believed to have been involved in the collision was recovered. An Edison man has been charged with Knowingly Leaving the Scene of a Motor Vehicle Accident Resulting in Serious Bodily Injury and Endangering an Injured Victim.
- ❖ On February 1, 2023 at 6:35 A.M., a dump truck, contracted by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, was salting the main body of Route 3 East with the dump body of the truck elevated. The elevated dump body entangled in power lines that extended across both Route 3 East and West main bodies and service roads. This crash took down three utility poles, energized the fence that divides the highway, caused power outages in the area and resulted in the highway to be shut down for over 10 hours. The highway is a main corridor that leads to and from the Lincoln Tunnel to New

York City, which over 500,000 motorists travel each day. As a result of this incident, major traffic diversion plans were implemented by our Traffic Bureau, mutual aid partners and the Department of Transportation.

- ❖ On November 30, 2023 Police Officer Taylor Ensmann received the AAA Traffic Safety Hero’s Award for his continued efforts to maintain safety for all motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists.

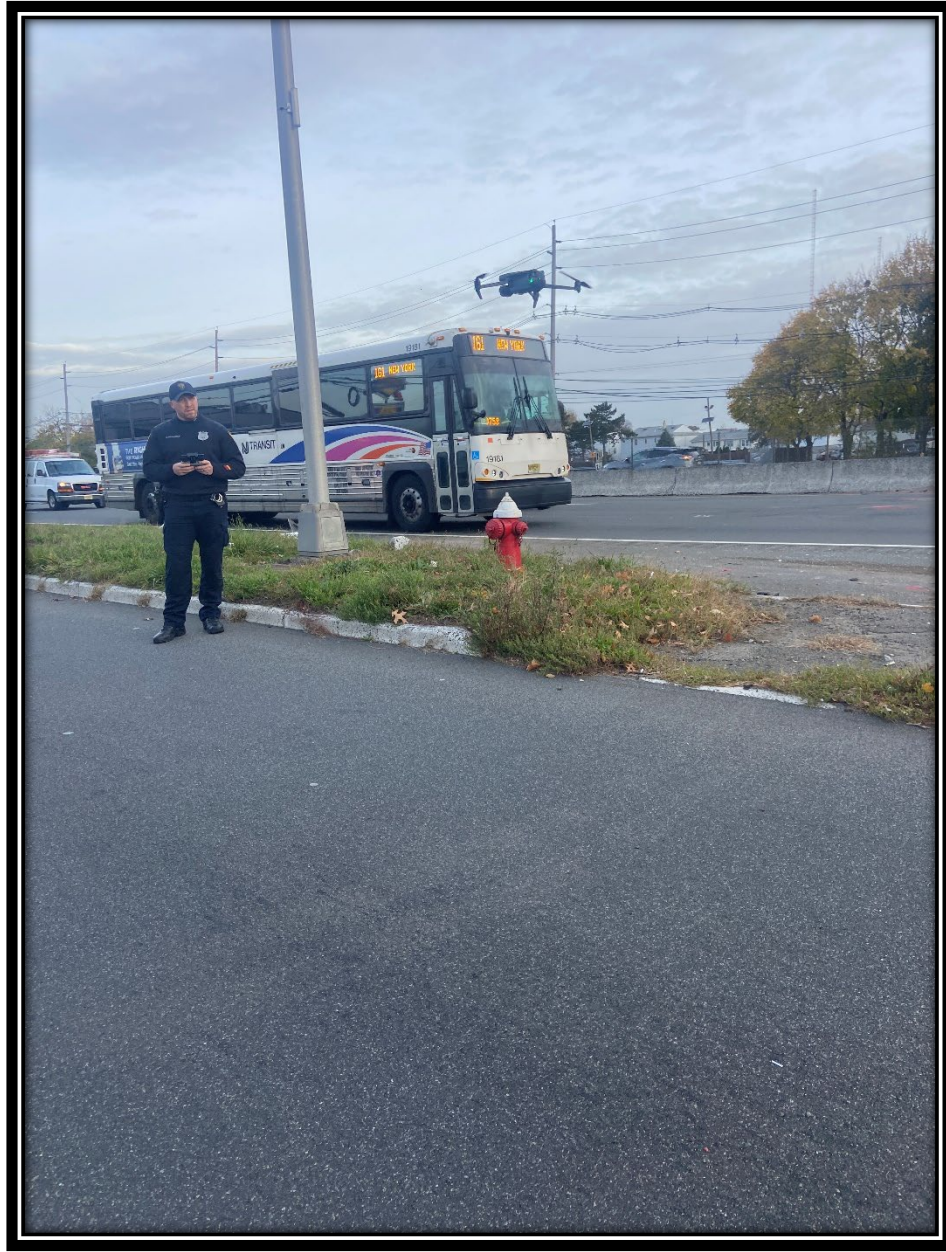
**2023 TRAFFIC BUREAU STATISTICS**

Crashes total.....	1,346
Fatal Crashes total.....	1
Follow up crash investigations.....	71
Traffic Studies.....	6
Traffic Enforcement Details.....	474
Message Trailer Deployments.....	37



# UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

The Secaucus Police Department now has the ability to use Unmanned Aerial Systems (Drone) to assist in police operations and general public safety missions. *Police Officer Michael Bronowich* has been named “Chief Pilot” of the Unmanned Aerial Systems program, which is overseen by the Traffic Bureau Commander. The policy allows for the use of Unmanned Aerial Systems for legitimate law enforcement purposes including, but not limited to search and rescue, situational awareness, hostage or barricaded subject incidents, hazardous material incidents that require a stand-off distance, et. al.





# OPERATIONS SECTION COMMUNICATIONS

Communications is made up of 8 full-time and 5 part-time civilian dispatchers and is overseen by *Lieutenant Wayne Bruton*. The Secaucus Police Department Communications Center is one of only three public safety answering points (PSAP) in Hudson County.

Secaucus' communications center answers 9-1-1 calls from residents and visitors of the Town. These emergency calls can be for any type of incident, police, fire or medical. Each telecommunicator holds a certification as a 9-1-1 telecommunicator operator. Every telecommunicator operator is required to complete all requisite in-service training, as prescribed by the *New Jersey Office of Telecommunications Services (OETS)*.

In addition to receiving calls for service, Secaucus Police Department Communications is the primary radio dispatch for both the police and fire departments and other support agencies. As the vital link between headquarters and field personnel, officers radio into the Communications Center for computer checks on people and property to be run through CJIS, NCIC and ACS/ATS.

Secaucus Police Department Communications Center is the first in the State of New Jersey to become an accredited public safety answering point (PSAP) by the *New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP)*.

## Total Calls Received in 2023

<b>POLICE CALLS</b>	<b>FIRE CALLS</b>	<b>EMS CALLS</b>
58,533	903	2,640



# OPERATIONS SECTION

## DETECTIVE DIVISION

The Secaucus Police Department Detective Division is responsible for general and major crime investigations, under the command of *Detective/Lieutenant Michael Torres* and supervision of *Detective/Sergeant Giacomo Sallustio*. There are three detective positions (*Detective Gabriel Galella*, *Detective Sean Egan* and *Detective Kristen Bronowich*). Additionally, there is also a position, where a police officer from the Patrol Division rotates to the Detective Division on a quarterly basis. In 2023, *Police Officers Jonathan Padron, Mikhail Kowlessar, Thomas Hering and Joshua Sigmund* spent one calendar quarter assigned to the Detective Division. Detectives rotate being “on-call,” on a weekly basis, to have investigators/crime scene processing available 24 hours per day/7 days per week.

The Detective Division provides timely follow-up investigations, solve crimes, assist victims, processes crime scenes and conducts interviews and/or interrogations of suspects, victims and witnesses. Each detective receives advanced specialized training and continuing education. Some of these specialized trainings include, but are not limited to major crimes investigations, financial crimes, interview and interrogation, crime scene processing, computer crimes, arson, sexual assault investigations and forensic interviewing of children. In addition to her normal duties, *Detective Kristen Bronowich* is also assigned to the New Jersey State Police’s *Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)* Task Force. The mission of the *Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)* Task Force is to investigate, apprehend and prosecute internet sexual predators who exploit children through the use of computers or other technologies.

Detectives also conduct administrative background investigations for police and fire department applicants, along with applicants for local permits. Detectives receive specialized training in liquor license investigations and review all liquor license sales applications within Secaucus. Periodically, Detectives conduct inspections at licensed liquor establishments within the Town.

In 2023, Detectives followed up on 519 reported crimes, including, but not limited to sexual assaults, property crimes, burglaries, aggravated assaults, an attempted murder etc. Detectives cleared 84.15% of these cases. Additionally, in 2023, Detectives worked jointly with the Secaucus Fire Prevention Bureau to investigate the origin and cause for 7 structure fires with Secaucus.

### **SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT 2023 CASES INVESTIGATED**

- ❖ On February 11, 2023 at 1:02 A.M. patrol officers were dispatched to the Aloft Hotel on a Domestic Violence Incident. During their investigation they arrested a 47-year-old man from Maryland for severely beating his wife, including striking her in the head with a glass object. During their investigation they observed an empty handgun holster on the floor of the hotel room and secured it for detectives. Subsequently, *Detective Sean Egan* obtained a warrant to search the room. During the search, oxycodone and a loaded 9mm handgun were seized. The man was additionally charged with several weapons offenses, most notably *Certain Persons not to Possess Firearms [2C:39-7]*, due to prior convictions of murder, kidnapping et. al.
- ❖ On March 2, 2023 at 3:11 P.M. Secaucus Police responded to Kohl’s, 3 Millcreek Drive, on report of a man who was walking around the store committing lewd acts. The man was gratifying himself in view of the public where he could be observed by children under the age of thirteen. After being approached by a Loss Prevention Officer, the man then left the store. After a follow up investigation by *Detective Kristen Bronowich*, the man was identified as a 27-year resident of

Smithtown, NY. He surrendered himself to the Secaucus Police on March 6, 2023 and was charged with Sexual Assault [2C:14-2(b)] and Criminal Sexual Contact [2C:14-3b].

- ❖ On June 15, 2023, members of the Secaucus Police Detective Division arrested a 35-year-old Secaucus resident. After a seven-month long investigation, led by Secaucus Police *Detective Kristen Bronowich*, it was confirmed that this man both viewed and uploaded numerous videos that depicted children engaging in sexual acts. He was charged with Endangering the Welfare of a Child [2C:24-4b(5)(a)(I)] and Endangering the Welfare of a Child [2C:24-4b(5)(b)(III)]. The Court released this man from custody on a Summons, pending his appearance in Court.
- ❖ On September 14, 2023, Detectives from the Secaucus Police Department arrested a Bayonne resident for numerous thefts of catalytic converters. On June 16, 2023, the Garfield Police Department notified surrounding jurisdictions of a suspect vehicle, a White colored Honda Civic, involved in catalytic converter thefts within their jurisdiction. At 2:28 A.M. Secaucus *Police Officer Jason Mitchell* observed this vehicle on Route 3 East travelling at over 100 mph. The vehicle failed to stop for police and a vehicle pursuit was initiated. The pursuit was later terminated once sight of the vehicle was lost in Jersey City. It was discovered that the 2013 Honda Civic was stolen from Newark in April of 2023. *Detective Sean Egan* was able to learn that the same vehicle was observed within an industrial area of Secaucus earlier in that night. During a follow up investigation it became known that the Bayonne man had unlawfully stole numerous catalytic converters from five businesses in Secaucus. On September 14, 2023 *Detective Sergeant Giacomo Sallustio* and *Detective Egan*, along with Detectives from the Bayonne Police Department, Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office and the FBI went to Bayonne to serve the Bayonne man with arrest warrants for the aforementioned crimes. The suspect exited a Toyota Camry near his residence, that was later determined to be stolen from Jersey City. Moments later the suspect was seen leaving his residence and after a brief foot pursuit, he was placed under arrest. At the time of his arrest a loaded 9mm Taurus Millennium semi-automatic pistol was recovered from his person.
- ❖ On February 28, 2023 at 5:50 PM a 17-year-old was the victim of a robbery while in Schmidt's Woods. There were three assailants who assaulted the juvenile victim and verbally threatened the victim with a handgun, however no firearm was displayed. Some marijuana and the victim's Iphone were stolen. On the night of the incident, a 16-year-old male of Secaucus was arrested. *Detective Gabriel Galella* conducted an exhaustive follow up investigation, which led to the identification and arrest of the other two assailants. On August 3, 2023, then 19-year-old man of Union City was arrested and on September 27, 2023 a 15 year old male of Union City was also arrested. All three were charged with Robbery, Conspiracy to Commit Robbery, Aggravated Assault, et. al.
- ❖ In October 2023, the Secaucus Police Department received a tip that a file depicting child sexual abuse material was viewed/uploaded to an account that was logged into via an IP address that hit off of a cellular tower within Secaucus. The investigation spearheaded by *Detective Kristen Bronowich* revealed that a Harrison Resident was the possessor of this file, depicting child sexual abuse material and it further revealed that he is a Police Dispatcher and Special I Police Officer for the Harrison Police Department. On December 7, 2023, members of the Secaucus Police Detective Division, assisted by the New Jersey State Police I.C.A.C. Unit and Harrison Police

Department Internal Affairs Unit executed a Court Authorized search of the man's Cleveland Avenue residence in Harrison, NJ. During the search, over 1,000 images depicting child sexual abuse material were located. He was arrested and charged with Endangering the Welfare of a Child [2C:24-4b(5)(b)(II)].



# ANTI-CRIME UNIT

The Secaucus Police Department Anti-Crime Unit conducts proactive criminal investigations, including, but not limited to: narcotics, vice crimes, street crimes and fatal overdose investigations, under the supervision of *Detective/Sergeant Matthew Ford*. There are three detective positions, but two are filled by *Detective Frederick Kowal III* and *Detective David Delseni*. Additionally, there is also a position, where a police officer from the Patrol Division rotates to the Anti-Crime Unit on a quarterly basis. In 2023, *Police Officers Kiril Petrov, Philip Caruso, Jesus Rodriguez, Jason Mitchell and Christopher Miller* spent one calendar quarter assigned to the Anti-Crime Unit.

Anti-Crime Unit Detectives also rotate being “on-call,” on a weekly basis, to assist the Detective Division. They also respond to resident complaints made to the Secaucus Police Department’s Tip Line [SPDTIPS@Secaucusnjpolice.gov](mailto:SPDTIPS@Secaucusnjpolice.gov). This unit works closely with the Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office, Drug Enforcement Administration along with other municipal police departments throughout Hudson County. The Anti-Crime Unit has been instrumental in solving many major investigations within Secaucus and throughout the State of New Jersey.

The Anti-Crime Unit seized 7 guns and \$4,658.00 in contraband cash in 2023.

## **NOTEWORTHY CASES INVESTIGATED BY THE ANTI-CRIME UNIT IN 2023**

- ❖ From August 2022 until January 2023 the Verizon Store, located at 200 Mill Creek Drive was burglarized on four separate occasions. Our detectives conducted an extensive follow up investigation with police departments in New York. On January 10, 2023, the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit accompanied by members of the Westchester Police Department and the FBI arrested the three individuals responsible for these burglaries at their residences in New York.
- ❖ On January 10, 2023 a vehicle was stolen during a home invasion in Morristown. On January 11, 2023, *Detective Michael Borrelli* was on his way into work and observed the aforementioned stolen vehicle in the Northend of Secaucus. He followed the vehicle and multiple units tried to apprehend the suspects who were seen in the driveway of a Maple Street resident. The vehicle fled and crashed into *Police Officer Eccles’* personal vehicle who was in the area and off-duty at the time. A witness stated she observed the driver in possession of a handgun. A vehicle pursuit was initiated, but the vehicle got away. The 20 year old Newark resident, who committed the home invasion in Morristown was also charged for the events in Secaucus since *Detective Borrelli* was able to positively identify him as the driver of the stolen vehicle.
- ❖ On January 26, 2023 at 3:02 A.M., the Secaucus Police responded on a call of an armed robbery at the Aloft Hotel, 460 Harmon Meadow Boulevard. It became known that the victims met with a man known to them in their hotel room and a short time later two other men, entered the hotel room while brandishing handguns. Three of the victims were held against their will in the bathroom of the hotel room. However, when one of the victims refused to enter the bathroom he was stabbed in his upper leg by the man known to the victims. Despite an exhaustive search by the Secaucus Police K-9 Unit and the Hudson County Sheriff’s Office K-9 Unit, these criminals fled the area with approximately \$20,000.00 of the victims’ cash in a getaway vehicle that was waiting in the parking lot, operated by a New York Man. Initial responding police officers located one of the victims in the lobby of the hotel bleeding heavily from an arterial bleed on his leg. *Police Officer Dwight Wise* immediately applied a tourniquet to the victim’s leg to control the bleeding, presumably saving his life. The victim was transported to the Jersey City Medical Center where

he was treated and released. The crime was investigated by members of the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit, under the supervision of *Detective Sergeant Matthew Ford*. On February 4, 2023 the getaway driver, a New York man, was arrested at the Secaucus Police Department by Anti-Crime Unit Detectives. One of the gunman was arrested on February 8, 2023 in New York. Additionally, we issued an arrest warrant for the person who did the stabbing and set up the robbery. Charges for those involved for the Secaucus robbery include, but are not limited to Attempted Murder, Armed Robbery, Conspiracy, and various weapons offenses.

- ❖ On February 21, 2023 at 4:53 P.M. the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit were patrolling the Route 3 East corridor. While on patrol, they observed a 2017 Gray Chevrolet Cruze driving on the white dotted lane marker for a significant distance. After observing this motor vehicle violation, they stopped the vehicle in the area of 215 Route 3 East. During the motor vehicle, detectives conducted a consensual search of the vehicle. During the search, detectives located a quantity of crystal methamphetamine, drug paraphernalia and a Remington Game Master Pump Action .243 caliber Rifle. A man and woman both of Bath, NY were arrested.
- ❖ On March 22, 2023 at 9:06 P.M. the Secaucus Police Department's Anti-Crime Unit were patrolling the area of the Rodeway Inn Motel, 155 Route 3 East. They observed a 2021 BMW 540i pull into the parking lot. The driver exited the BMW and entered the motel for only a few moments and exited with two residents of Paterson. The trio entered the BMW for a few moments, then the Paterson residents exited the BMW and entered the Rodeway Inn, while the operator of the BMW exited the motel's parking lot heading onto Route 3 East. Due to the heavily tinted windows and cracked windshield the Anti-Crime Unit stopped the BMW. Upon viewing the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), it appeared to be inconsistent with those installed by BMW. Detectives also inspected the VIN label on the driver's side door, which had misspellings on it giving the inference it was fraudulent. Upon inspecting the VIN number on another part of the vehicle, it was discovered that the BMW was stolen on September 23, 2022 in Morristown. During a search of the vehicle, a large quantity of evidence of fraudulent bank activity along with personal identifying information of various persons were seized. Additionally, three forged Georgia Temporary Registrations were seized. The driver of the vehicle, a resident of Roselle Park, was placed under arrest. Secaucus Police Officers responded back to the Rodeway Inn and located the two Paterson residents. They were both arrested for having outstanding warrants. During a consensual search of their hotel room, the male was found in possession of forty-five (45) wax folds of suspected heroin along with some drug paraphernalia.
- ❖ On April 9, 2023 at 2:56 A.M., the Secaucus Police responded to the Dunkin' Donuts located at 216 County Avenue, on a report of an armed robbery. Two males, later identified as Bayonne residents, entered the establishment and one of them brandished a black handgun. While holding the store employee at gunpoint, they stole approximately \$350.00 in cash from the register and fled to an awaiting Chevrolet Equinox, that was occupied. Another Bayonne resident and an East Newark resident acted as "lookouts" while the other two were inside the Dunkin Donuts. At 5:41 A.M. on April 9, 2023, these individuals were involved in another armed robbery of a Dunkin' Donuts located at 177 Washington Avenue in Nutley. Detectives from the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit worked collaboratively with Nutley Police Detectives and broadcasted the information gathered to all law enforcement agencies in the State. On April 11, 2023 at 12:15 A.M., a diligent police officer from the Springfield, NJ Police Department located the Chevrolet Equinox in a

parking lot near a Wawa in that jurisdiction. After an on-scene investigation was conducted by the Springfield Police Department, officers located a black 9mm handgun with a defaced serial number and seventeen round magazine within the Chevrolet Equinox. One of the males was placed under arrest for unlawfully possessing the handgun. After a thorough investigation was conducted by detectives from the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit and Nutley Police Department, with assistance from the Springfield Police Department, arrests were made in the armed robberies.

- ❖ On May 4, 2023 at 5:23 A.M., a Sandpiper Key resident called the Secaucus Police Department and reported that an individual burglarized her parked vehicle and stole some money from within. During the investigation it was discovered that the burglar entered two other vehicles and attempted to burglarize a third. Two of the vehicles were parked on Sandpiper Key and the other was parked on Sandcastle Key, all within the Harmon Cove Townhouse complex. Detectives from the Anti-Crime Unit developed evidence from the crime scenes and identified a Jersey City resident as the person who committed these crimes. On May 16, 2023 Detectives from the Anti-Crime Unit arrested the burglar at his residence in Jersey City.
- ❖ On July 16, 2023 at 10:20 A.M. the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit was patrolling the area near Extended Stay Hotel, 1 Meadowlands Parkway, where they observed a suspected drug transaction take place. To confirm their suspicions, the Anti-Crime Unit stopped the involved 2009 Infiniti G37. In plain view inside the vehicle Detectives observed a digital scale that is commonly used to weigh narcotics for street sale. Additionally, the driver, identified as a resident of Jersey City had over \$2,300.00 in his pants pocket. Secaucus Police K-9 “Brix” was summoned to the scene to conduct an open air sniff of the vehicle and he positively indicated to the presence of narcotics within. During a search of the vehicle, a quantity of suspected heroin was recovered along with a Taurus 9mm handgun, a Smith and Wesson Bodyguard .380 caliber handgun, a handgun magazine loaded .380 caliber bullets and a thirty (30) round high-capacity magazine loaded with eleven (11) 9mm bullets. The driver and his female passenger were placed under arrest. The passenger was found in possession of a quantity of cocaine and over \$400.00 in cash. A search of an Extended Stay Hotel room associated with driver and his passenger was conducted. During the search of the room over thirty-five (35) bags of suspected heroin, an ounce of suspected methamphetamine, suspected cocaine and other evidence indicative of illicit drug distribution were seized. Within the room at the time of the search was another Jersey City resident who was also arrested.
- ❖ On July 27, 2023 at 8:26 P.M. the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit was patrolling the area near Red Roof Inn, 15 Meadowlands Parkway, where they observed a suspected drug transaction take place. To confirm their suspicions, the Anti-Crime Unit stopped a Maywood resident in the vehicle he was riding in. He turned over ten (10) suspected Oxycodone 15 mg pills and he was placed under arrest. Detectives from the Anti-Crime Unit conducted a follow investigation to identify the person who illegally sold him the Oxycodone pills. Shortly thereafter, Detectives confirmed the identity of the male who distributed the Oxycodone pills and subsequently placed a male resident of Ridgefield under arrest. During a search incident to his arrest he was found in possession of suspected cocaine. A search of his room at the Red Roof Inn was conducted. During the search of the room a quantity suspected cocaine, over 75 pills of suspected Xanax, 15 Oxycodone pills, over 90 Adderall pills, strips and pills of Suboxone, Cyclobenzaprine, \$1,451.00 in cash and other evidence indicative of illicit drug distribution were seized. Additionally, a Smith and Wesson 9mm

handgun and a magazine loaded with some hollow point ammunition was seized. The handgun was found to be stolen from Massachusetts in 2022.

- ❖ On August 25, 2023 at 2:36 P.M., the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit responded to a residence on the 200 block of Front Street, Secaucus, New Jersey to conduct a follow up investigation for a fatal overdose that occurred in July of 2023. During a search of the Front Street residence, a 38-year-old male of Union City was found in possession of suspected cocaine and fifteen (15) suspected ecstasy pills. He was arrested and also found to have an active warrant from Jersey City with a bail of \$2,000.00. Also during a search of the residence, a 40-year-old female of Lake Hopatcong was found in possession of over twenty (20) grams of suspected methamphetamine, two bags of suspected raw heroin and a quantity of suspected Adderall, along with drug paraphernalia. She was also placed under arrest.
- ❖ In June 2023, the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit began conducting an extensive investigation into the illegal sale of narcotics to patrons of Secaucus hotels. During the investigation, undercover detectives made numerous purchases, resulting in the seizure of over five ounces of methamphetamine, Fentanyl pills, and cocaine. Due to the lethality of Fentanyl affecting the nation, the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit partnered with Investigators from Homeland Security Investigations. During this collaborative investigation, undercover officers purchased over 430 pills containing Fentanyl and quantities of cocaine. On September 20, 2023, members of the Secaucus Police Department, Secaucus Police Department K-9 Unit, Homeland Security Investigations, Jersey City Police Department Street Crimes Unit and North Bergen Police Department conducted an operation that led the arrest of three Hudson County residents. After one suspect's arrest, a court-authorized search of his Jersey City residence, located on Van Wagenen Avenue was conducted. During the search a quantity of methamphetamine, morphine, drug paraphernalia along with two .22 caliber rifles were seized. Also on this date, another suspect was located in a relative's residence on the 8100 block of 4th Avenue in North Bergen, which was also searched. Upon entering the residence, officers observed evidence that two suspects were manufacturing crack cocaine. During a court-authorized search of the residence, over 480 grams of suspected Fentanyl, with a street value of almost \$25,000.00 was seized along with over six ounces of suspected cocaine, 25 Fentanyl pills, and evidence that the residence was being used to manufacture controlled dangerous substances for street sale.
- ❖ During the above narcotics investigation it became known that one of the members of this illicit drug distribution ring was kidnapped at knifepoint on June 25, 2023 in Jersey City, since he owed a female money, another member of this illicit drug distribution ring. The victim was bound and driven around Hudson County in the back of a U-haul truck, driven by a male suspect, for hours and robbed of cash and personal items. The victim was ultimately released by the kidnappers. On October 20, 2023 Detectives from the Secaucus Police Anti-Crime Unit, Secaucus Police K-9 Unit, North Bergen Police Department and Jersey City Police Department Major Case Unit went to the residence of the female in North Bergen to arrest her on a warrant for the kidnapping and robbery. After her arrest, a court-authorized search of her residence, located on Palisade Avenue in North Bergen, was conducted. During the search, over three and a half ounces of suspected methamphetamine, Gamma Hydroxybutyrate, Adderall, Ritalin and Clonazepam and drug paraphernalia were seized. Additionally, numerous fraudulent items, specifically credit cards, identifications, ledgers with banking information, mail and social security cards relating to over



100 victims, were seized throughout the residence. Three other individuals were also placed under arrest inside the residence.

# JUVENILE BUREAU

Members of the Detective Division have the dual function of performing the duties of the Juvenile Bureau. Members of the Juvenile Bureau are trained on a wide variety of issues related to the Juvenile Justice System. Part of the Juvenile Bureau's protection role includes the tracking and registration of sex offenders under Megan's Law. Members of the Juvenile Bureau are also available to provide assistance to parents of missing children. The Juvenile Bureau has registered 29 Megan's Law registrants in 2023.

The Juvenile Bureau assigns specially trained School Resource Officers (SRO) to all Secaucus Schools for the protection and safety of the children. *Police Officer Thomas Keegan* is a full-time School Resource Officer, certified by the Police Training Commission, and is assigned to the Secaucus High School.

Retired police officers were hired as Special III Police Officers and are all certified as School Resource Officers by the Police Training Commission. These Special Police Officers possess full law enforcement powers and are assigned to the Early Learning Center, Clarendon, Huber Street and the Secaucus Middle Schools.



*Police Officer William Eccles* is a Law Enforcement Against Drugs (L.E.A.D.) instructor assigned to the Secaucus Schools. He is specially trained in areas such as child development, classroom management, teaching techniques, and communication skills. The L.E.A.D. curriculum is taught in grades 1, 3, and 5 at all of the schools. All our L.E.A.D. programs are accredited, which apply evidence-based best practices and discuss their effectiveness, teach strategies for building resiliency, and teach life skills and prevention strategies. Each 'Too Good' program received a third-party researcher evaluation where researchers used randomized treatment-control group designs (pre-test/post-test, 20-week post-test, or



one year follow-up). These researchers examined pre-test, equivalence between treatment and control groups, potential bias of loss of student data over time; quality of program implementation; and estimates of reliability and validity of assessment tools. When school is not in session, School Resource Officers put together in a variety of community policing events and engage the youth at our local parks.



# THERAPY CANINE PROGRAM


The *Therapy Canine Program* is used to enhance community relations and assist the general public, first responders and the staff of the Secaucus Police Department cope with the exposure to traumatic events. *Police Officer Taylor Ensmann* and his personally owned golden retriever, *Oakley*, serve as the Secaucus Police Department's Therapy Canine Team. Secaucus is the first New Jersey police department to implement the Therapy Canine Program. Additionally, therapy canines provide affection, comfort and support to those affected by trauma, mental health and crime. It is the policy of the Secaucus Police Department to use therapy canines for community outreach and engagement. The therapy canine enhances and assists in the response and treatment of trauma and mental health by providing well-trained dogs as a medium. *Oakley* is used at public events, such as street fairs, concerts, parks and also visits the local senior citizen housing facilities and VA Clinic. Zahava Pianko, Huber Street School Psychologist, requested the assistance of *Oakley* to participate in her innovative program, which was among the first of its kind. Two times per month *Police Officer Ensmann* and *Oakley* are at Huber Street School and are present during focused group teaching sessions. The goals for the students through the use of our Therapy Dog will include, but not limited to: relieve stress and anxiety, increase positive mood and self-confidence, improve socialization skills and executive functioning and assist with sensory regulation.



# Secaucus Boy Scouts Meet Oakley, SPD's Therapy Dog

Oakley is owned by Secaucus Police Officer Taylor Ensmann, who used to be a Secaucus Cub Scout:



Carly Baldwin, Patch Staff 

Posted Fri, Jan 27, 2023 at 8:22 pm ET | Updated Sun, Jan 29, 2023 at 1:45 pm ET

 Reply





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

*Police Officers Thomas Keegan and William Eccles* actively engage Secaucus' youth during school days and when school is not in session. These two officers are at the forefront of our community policing activities. The Secaucus Police Department also utilizes social media, [www.facebook.com/Secaucus Police](https://www.facebook.com/SecaucusPolice) and [@secaucuspolice](https://www.instagram.com/secaucuspolice) on Instagram, administered by *Lieutenant Kimberly Elphick*, to maintain transparency and keep the public informed, along with our webpage [www.secaucuspolice.org](http://www.secaucuspolice.org). The social media platforms have approximately 11,000 followers.



On January 21, 2023 Detective Sean Egan gave a presentation relating to “elderly scams” to the residents of the Elms.

*Special Police Officer III Lonnie Friedman* read to the students at Clarendon School throughout the school year.



January 18, 2023 *Police Officers Thomas Keegan and William Eccles* presented a Middle School Student with a new wheel chair that was provided by the Secaucus PBA Local 84 and the Secaucus Emergency Fund.



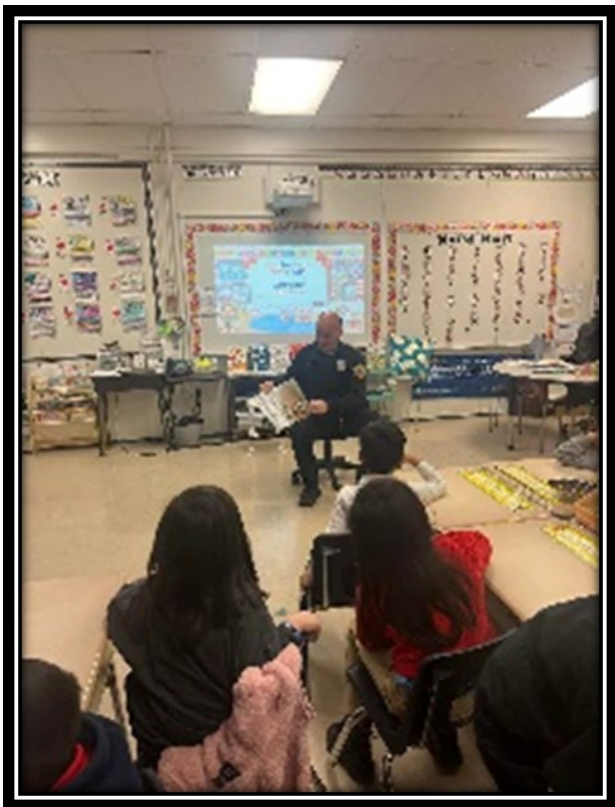
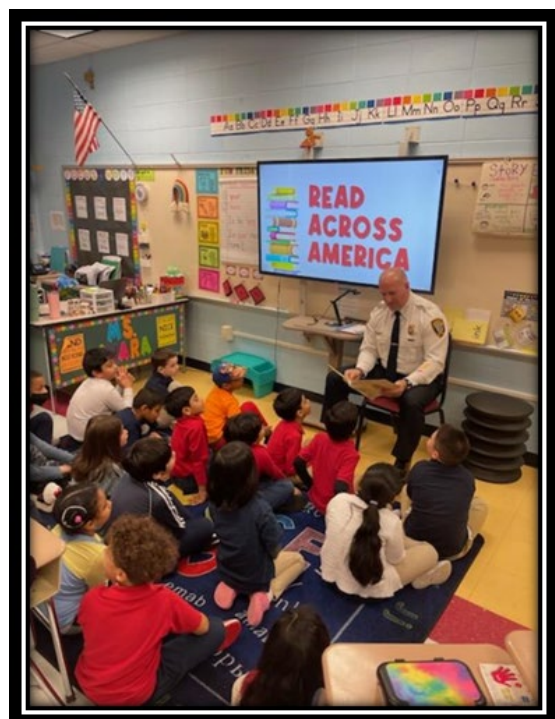
On February 3, 2023 Detective Galella and Police Officer Restrepo presented an overview of the Secaucus Police Department at Saint Peters Prep School's career week.



On February 25, 2023 we held a “skate with a cop” event at the Ice Rink.

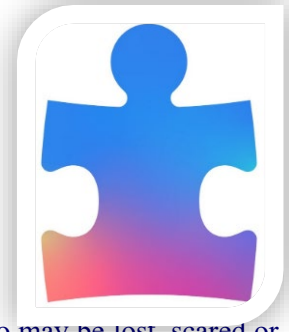


During the week of February 27, 2023 Chief Miller and all School Resource Officers and Special III Police Officers participated in Read Across America.





## Secaucus Police Department Autism Registry



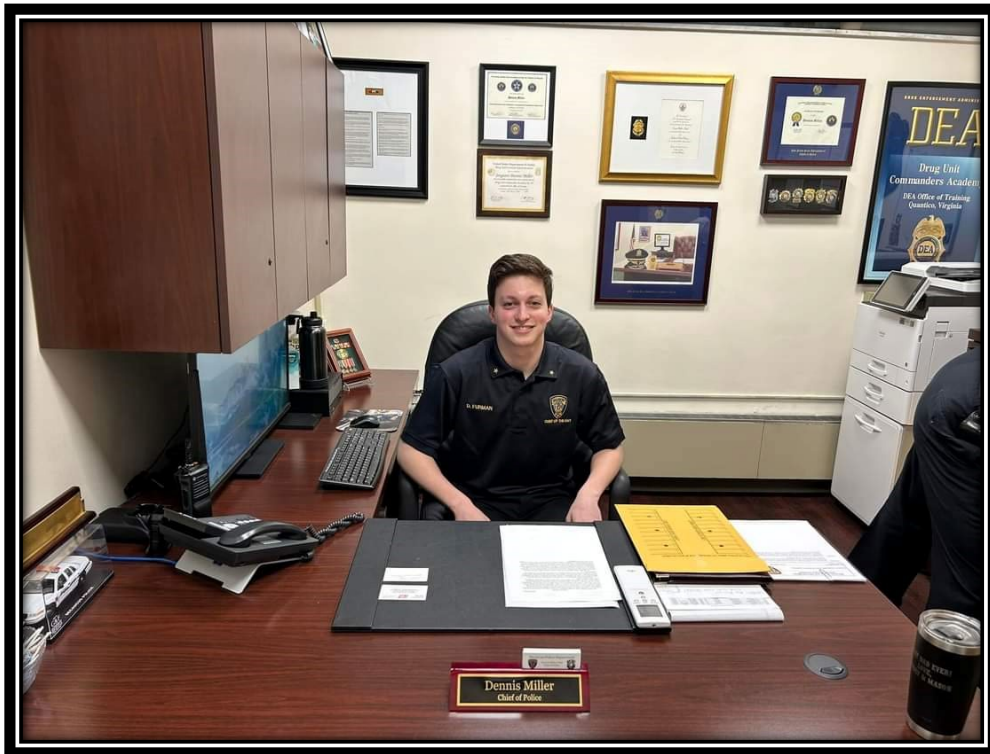
In April of 2022, the Secaucus Police Department made it easier to help our citizens who may be lost, scared or have difficulty communicating with police officers and first responders. The idea originated from *Police Officers Mary O'Keefe and Salvatore Manente Jr.* and implemented by the Administration Section Commander *Captain Scott Coar*. Our Autism registry is designed for residents who may be challenged with the developmental disabilities associated with Autism, regardless of where they fall on the spectrum. We have created this program to assist your loved ones who may be at a higher risk for wandering, getting lost, or who have difficulty communicating with others. Interested family members and caregivers were asked to complete the online registration form regarding their loved one. This form provides useful information to responding police officers and first responders. To ensure a completed registration form, we are also asked for a current digital photograph of the affected family member. This information is stored in a database intended solely for this purpose, accessible only by law enforcement personnel, and will not be disseminated. The completed files are accessible to our police officers during times of emergency (elopement, lost, wandering, etc...). This program is **voluntary**, however the information provided is **extremely** helpful to our officers whose purpose is to keep **all** members of our community safe. [We have also equipped our police officers with special equipment (communication boards, etc...) to aid in this mission].

- ✓ *On August 24, 2023, officers assisted an adult autistic male that was wandering alone and appeared to be in crisis. Through the use of our Autism Registry Program, officers were able to get this male the assistance he needed as well as make contact with his guardian to safely reunite them!*

On March 16, 2023 students from Saint Matthews Nursery School were given a tour of the Secaucus Police Department by Police Officers Thomas Keegan and William Eccles.



On March 25, 2023, August 26, 2023 and November 4, 2023 Lieutenant Christopher Rinaldi organized a “blood drive” through Robert Wood Johnson hospital at the Secaucus Recreation Center. On May 6, 2023 the blood drive was held at the Shree Swaminarayan Indian Temple, which helped build closer ties between the Indian community and our police department.



As part of our ongoing efforts to engage the community, Daniel Furman, a high school senior, acted as the “Chief for the Day” on March 28, 2023. He won the title after submitting a 300-word essay on how to improve the Secaucus Police Department. During his time spent with the police department he was given an overview and practical demonstration of each division, bureau and unit within the police department.

To keep the public informed and answer any questions that may arise, the Command Staff in conjunction with the Mayor and Council hold ***“Community Meetings.”*** On April 20, 2023 a meeting was held at the Harmon Cove Townhouses. On October 3, 2023 a meeting was held at the Harmon Cove Towers.







On May 10, 2023 and June 7, 2023 we hosted “Coffee with a Cop” at our local Dunkin Donuts.







On May 16, 2023 we visited the Exceptional People of Secaucus [EPOS], which educates adults with developmental disabilities. *Police Officers Thomas Keegan, William Eccles and Salvatore Manente* discussed the Autism Registration and gave a block of instruction in the use of the 9-1-1 system.

On Saturday June 3, 2023 *Police Officer Thomas Keegan* along with *Police Officer William Eccles* and other bicycle patrol officers, hosted a bicycle safety course at Buchmuller Park.







On June 9, 2023, officers ran in the ***“Torch Run”*** in support of the Special Olympics.





On August 1, 2023 we hosted *National Night Out* in Buchmuller Park where Secaucus Police Officers were able to engage and interact with members of the community. It was estimated over 800-1000 residents attended.




**Ice Cream with a Cop**

**JOIN YOUR LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS FOR ICE CREAM AND A CONVERSATION**

**Where:** Mike's Ice Cream  
1540 Paterson Plank Road

**When:** Tuesday, July 11, 2023  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

No agenda or speeches, just a chance to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the officers in your community

**Secaucus Police Department**





On August 7, 2023 Chief Dennis Miller, Deputy Chief Joseph Baccola and Captain Austin Hawxhurst and Police Officer Taylor Ensmann attended a religious ceremony honoring their religion with the congregation of the Shree Swaminarayan Temple.

Reaching out to members of the Indian community, Secaucus Police Officers escorted Acharya Shree Jitendriyapriyadasji Swamiji Maharaj from Newark Liberty International Airport to the Temple in Secaucus on August 8, 2023.





On August 8, 2023 the Secaucus Police Department had the New Jersey *Motor Vehicle Commission* mobile office come so residents could handle their matters expeditiously and conveniently.



From August 14-17, 2023 the Secaucus Police Department hosted its *Junior Policy Academy* where approximately 35 kids attended. I credit the officers involved, *Police Officers Thomas Keegan, William Eccles, Joshua Sigmund, Mikhail Kowlessar, Justin Restrepo, Matthew Cutola and Detective Kristen Bronowich.*

On Thursday, August 24, 2023, *Police Officer Anthony Burgos* conducted the Secaucus Police Department's first public Active Shooter Training (Run, Hide & Fight) class at General Tool located at 75 Seaview Drive.





On October 4, 2023 we held *Walk to School with a Cop* for the police to interact with the youth. We walked several blocks with the school children to Clarendon School.





*Chief Miller and Deputy Chief Baccola attended the Diwali Festival on October 8, 2023.*



On October 16, 2023 we held *Walk to School with a Cop* for the police to interact with the youth. We walked several blocks with the school children to Huber Street School.





On October 31, 2023  
 Police Officers  
 Thomas Keegan,  
 William Eccles,  
 Joshua Sigmund and  
 Jason Mitchell  
 participated in  
 “Trunk or Treat.”





On November 2, 2023 *Police Officer Justin Restrepo* gave the Secaucus Cub Scouts Pack #87 a tour of our facility and an introduction of what the Secaucus Police Department does.

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/secaucus/secaucus-cub-scouts-tour-police-headquarters>





On November 6, 2023 myself, Deputy Chief Baccola and Police Officers William Eccles and Jonathan Padron read to the students at the Katherine Steffens Library Annex.





On November 12, 2023, *Chief Miller, Deputy Chief Baccola and Captain Hawxhurst* participated in the Diwali, New Year's and Community Open House at the Secaucus Temple.



On November 29, 2023, *Detective Gabriel Galella* gave a presentation to senior citizens at Kroll Heights on how to protect themselves against “scams.”



On December 12, 2023 members of the Secaucus Police Department partnered with the Hispanic American Law Enforcement Association and Walmart for the “Shop with Cop” event.







On December 20, 2023 members of the Secaucus PBA delivered presents with Santa to children throughout Secaucus.





# PLANNING, SPECIAL EVENTS & INTELLIGENCE

The Planning, Special Events & Intelligence Section schedules and develops security/operational plans for all special events, impending weather emergencies, threats etc. and acts as the liaison to the Secaucus Office of Emergency Management. This section evaluates and disseminates intelligence received relating to criminal activity, terrorism and natural disasters, etc. to agency personnel on a weekly basis. The Planning, Special Events & Intelligence Section acts as the Secaucus Police Department's Municipal Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (MCTC) and liaisons with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office and Federal Counterparts [JTTF]. The Planning, Special Events & Intelligence Section is responsible for the accountability of all departmental equipment and acts as the "Nasal Naloxone" coordinator. The Planning, Special Events & Intelligence Section Commander oversees the Secaucus Police Departments Automated License Plate Reader (A.L.P.R.) program.

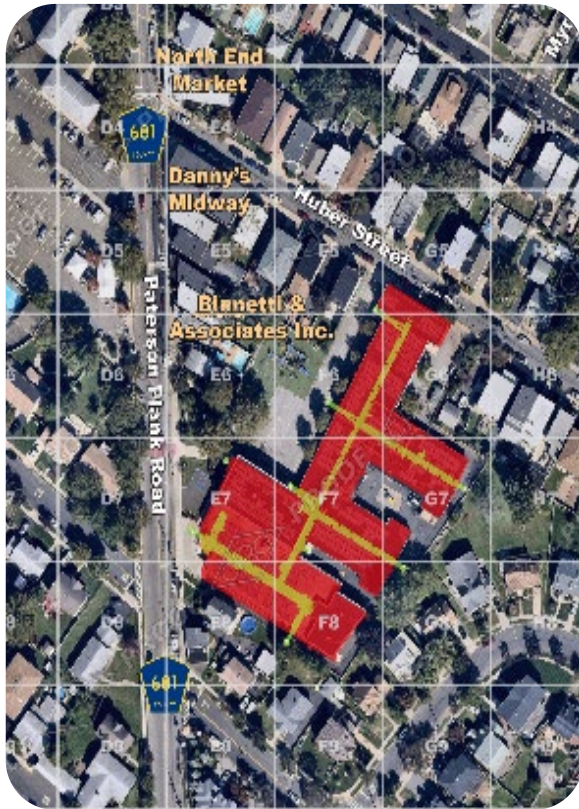
The Planning, Special Events & Intelligence Section is led by *Captain Carlos Goyenechea* and *Lieutenant Kimberly Elphick*. Some of the **noteworthy activities** of this section are as follows:

- ❖ *Lieutenant Kimberly Elphick* has been certified by Texas A & M University to conduct threat assessments and risk analysis for stakeholders of infrastructure. Throughout 2023 she had conducted assessments for all of the schools within the Secaucus School District. These assessments culminated with a presentation of each assessment to school administrators, school board members and Town Council members. The purpose of these assessments was to identify security concerns and areas of vulnerability within each school and make recommendations to nullify them.



- ❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section liaisons with the Office of Emergency Management and ensures the operational readiness of equipment. In 2023 *Captain Carlos Goyenechea* acquired two (2) HMMWV at no cost to the Secaucus taxpayer. They were transformed into High Water Rescue vehicles.

- ❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section planned the Memorial Day Parade held on May 20, 2023 and the Fireworks Celebration at the Town Pool on June 29, 2023.



❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section developed a plan to provide security and traffic control to include road closures during the annual Street Fair.

❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section is actively involved in the 1033 program that disseminates military surplus to government agencies at no cost to the tax payer. We have acquired a boat from the United States Navy at no cost to our taxpayers.

❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section has actively planned, assisted, and executed quarterly active shooter training in conjunction with Departmental personnel.

❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section has coordinated with various County and State Law Enforcement organizations along with the Secaucus Exposition Center for special events held on the property to include the Got Sole sneaker convention on August 19 & 20, 2023 and the Tattoo Festival, “Inked Out,” held between September 15 through 17, 2023.

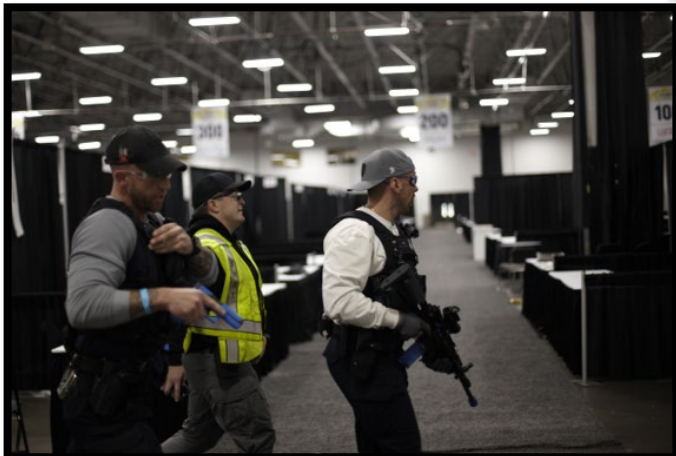
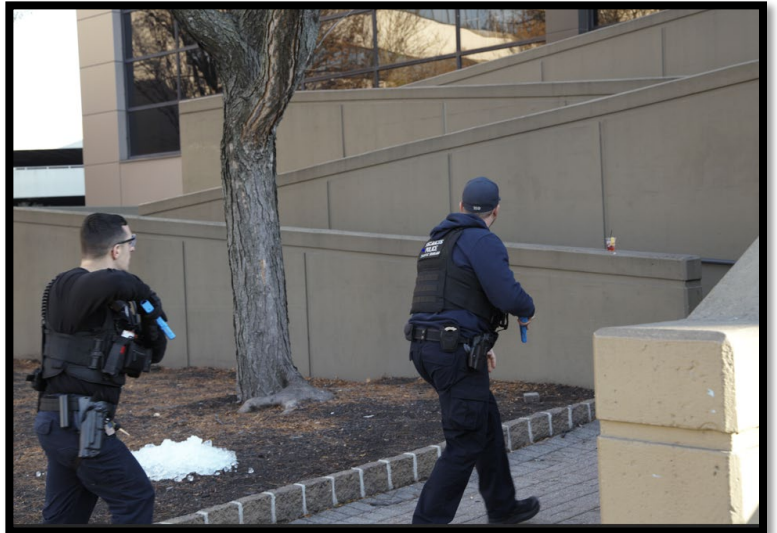
❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section coordinated with UPS management and Teamster Local 177 for a national strike, which was ultimately settled, prior to its occurrence. Both Management and Union personnel were pleasantly

surprised with the Police Departments efforts to both provide the potential strikers with their First Amendment to protest and managements rights to handle their business.

- ❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section prepared thorough operational planning and intelligence dissemination in November of 2023 for the largest Jewish event in New Jersey that is outside of a House of Worship during the Israeli/Palestinian crisis.
- ❖ On December 9, 2023 a fisherman discovered a lifeless body in the Hackensack River underneath the eastern spur of the New Jersey Turnpike. The Secaucus Police and Fire Marine Units were dispatched to the scene, along with Marine assets from Lyndhurst, Wallington and Kearny Fire Departments. The Secaucus Police Drone was launched and confirmed a body was caught on the support pillar. Dive teams from Lyndhurst and Wallington entered the water and the body was removed and taken to shore. During a visual examination of the decomposing body, it appears at this time, the unidentified adult male suffered gunshot wounds to his chest and face area. *Lieutenant Elphick* used open source media and conducted searches based on tattoos found on the body, which led to her identifying him. Based on her identification it was discovered that the male was murdered

in Baltimore, MD and was reported missing since November 2, 2023. the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office Homicide Unit is now the lead investigative agency.

- ❖ The Planning, Special Events and Intelligence Section planned a full scale department wide active shooter that was held at the Meadowlands Exposition Center on November 30, 2023, which tested personnel on effective responses to an active shooter.





# MUNICIPAL HUMANE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (MHLEO)

Just prior to leaving the Governor's Office, Chris Christie signed into law a bill that moved the law enforcement powers related to animal cruelty cases to the County Prosecutors. Under the newly revised statute, the power of humane law enforcement was transferred from the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NJSPCA) to the individual municipalities, who work in conjunction with, and are ultimately overseen by, the County Prosecutors.

Each municipality and police department is required to designate a Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officer. In order to hold the position of Humane Law Enforcement Officer, the designated police officer(s) must be certified by the Police Training Commission. The PTC certified Municipal Humane Law Enforcement Officers for the Town of Secaucus, are *Captain Scott Coar, Sergeant Mark Valentino and Sergeant Vince DeFazio*.

It is the policy of the Secaucus Police Department to enforce animal cruelty violations, animal welfare statutes, and related local ordinances in accordance with the New Jersey Attorney General and Hudson County Prosecutor's Office guidelines and directives. These officers work closely with Secaucus Animal Control and the Secaucus Animal Shelter.

In 2023 there were 13 Animal Cruelty Complaints handled by the Secaucus Police Department MHLEO. Charges were filed in 2 of the incidents. During that year no animal was seized, but one animal was surrendered by the owner. In 2023, the Secaucus Police Department responded to 184 Animal Incidents that were not classified as "cruelty complaints."

# BODY WORN CAMERAS



In March of 2021, the Secaucus Police Department purchased Body Worn Cameras from Axon Enterprise, Inc. of Scottsdale, Arizona. More specifically, the “Axon Body 3” were purchased. The Secaucus Police Department received grant funding from the State of New Jersey for the purchase of the Body Worn Cameras, but the recurring cost for storing the data will be borne by the taxpayer, which is approximately \$100,000.00 per year. In 2022 we received grant funding in the amount of

\$183,420.00 for our Body Worn Cameras.

All officers, regardless of rank or assignment, from the Chief of Police to the lowest patrol officer, have been assigned a Body Worn Camera. All personnel equipped with a Body Worn Camera have received training in the Body Worn Camera policy and Body Worn Camera functionalities.

In 2022 Body Worn Cameras were issued to all the Parking Enforcement Officers, which are activated each time the officer engages a member of the public.

*“Body Worn Cameras will promote accountability of both my officers and the public at large,” Chief Dennis Miller said. “Additionally, I believe that a majority of these recordings will highlight the professionalism and the courageousness exhibited by my officers while responding to police, fire and medical emergencies,” Miller said.*

# RESILIENCY PROGRAM

As Police Officers, we respond to a realm of high-pressure and traumatic events while putting our lives on the line every day. The emotional and mental toll of police work can build over time and contribute to a range of health issues, including increased blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, substance misuse, family and relationship stress, self-harm, and risk of suicide.

*Resiliency* is defined as the ability to overcome adversity. Attorney General Law Enforcement Directive No. 2019-1 requires all New Jersey Police Departments to be trained in Resiliency by December 2022. *Police Officer Matthew Garzone and Police Officer Justin Pardo* are the department's Resiliency Program Officers (RPO) and are available 24/7.

In addition, the RPOs will be available to assist and support the members of this department and any other law enforcement agency in the State of New Jersey. If anyone from the department is suffering from any of the listed health issues, feeling stressed out, or just wishes to talk to someone they are encouraged to reach out to the RPOs. All conversations with the RPOs are kept confidential. RPOs will only take action should the conversation reveal that an officer is a harm to himself/herself or others, or if they have committed a crime.

The *Resiliency Program* is not meant to replace existing support programs. Law enforcement officers are encouraged to continue to use these and other programs whenever needed.

- ❖ Being a law enforcement officer can have a major impact on an officer's mental health. As a profession, we do not mandate preventative measures to ensure the wellbeing of the most vulnerable asset, our personnel. Conversely, as a department, *Chief Miller* has taken some proactive steps to ensure our officers' wellbeing, such as critical incident debriefings. However, these critical incident debriefings are predicated on a critical incident occurring. The responsibilities and daily tasks performed by members of this profession can take a toll on a law enforcement officer's mental health. Common struggles that law enforcement officers face are anxiety, depression, insomnia, post-traumatic stress disorder and/or substance abuse. Providing training on these issues will help members of the Secaucus Police Department identify signs and symptoms in themselves and know how to deal with these issues. Therefore, *Chief Miller* mandated every sworn officer and dispatcher of the Secaucus Police Department, regardless of rank or assignment to meet individually and privately with *D/Sergeant Megan Connell* of the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, the County Resiliency Police Officer. This was done so Secaucus Police Officers could maintain some anonymity and feel free to discuss personal issues confidentially, without fear of reprisal.