

Hennepin County Sheriff's Office 2020 Annual Report



Sheriff's Welcome Message



SHERIFF DAVID P. HUTCHINSON

Any reflection on 2020 must begin with an acknowledgement that it was an unprecedented year. The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the unrest following the tragic death of George Floyd were challenging. Many of the goals I had for my second year in office were delayed had to set aside to focus on immediate public safety needs. Fortunately, the great men and women of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office were more than able to meet the challenges that arose in 2020. My staff was able to adapt and respond to the obstacles we faced last year, and we accomplished great things as a result.

Even during 2020's most challenging moments — and there were many — we never lost sight of our goal of providing the best possible public safety services to everyone who lives, works, or visits Hennepin County. Now as we seem to be entering the end phase of the pandemic and a more normal world is on the horizon, we pledge that we will not be deterred from our mission. We will always be here for you, no matter what.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. We welcome any comments you might have, and we will continue to listen and learn from the community that we serve.



Mission & Values

Mission
Statement

“Serving and protecting all in our community by furthering equal justice, safety, and wellness.”

Values

Ethics · Equality · Collaboration
Well-being · Innovation



2020: Year in Review Highlights



Launched body-worn camera program, trained and deployed equipment to over 110 staff members. (PG. 13)

Worked with Hennepin County Attorney and Hennepin County Courts to keep down the daily jail population to help control the spread of COVID-19 in the jail. (PG. 14)

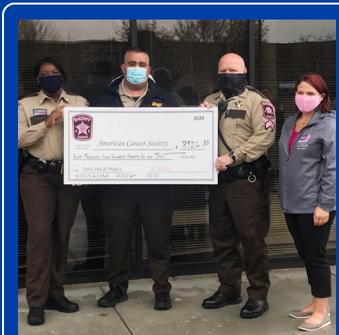
Replaced in-person jail visitation with free phone calls in response to COVID-19. (PG. 14)

Added a body scanner to the jail to help prevent contraband from entering the facility.

Added a telemedicine room to the jail to add more medical treatment options for inmates without creating additional COVID-19 infection risks. (PG. 14)

Provided court security services for multiple high-profile pre-trial hearings. (PG. 14)

With District Court, developed procedural changes to allow for continued court operations during COVID-19 pandemic, including the transition of almost all court hearings to remote appearances.



Raised nearly \$10k for the American Cancer Society via participation in the Pink Patch Project.



Gun Permit Unit moved to a paperless application process and online appointment system while handling a record number of permit applications. (PG. 10)

Seized over 200 illegal firearms through joint task force operations. (PG. 11)



Launched online Narcan training and Deterra Drug Disposal bag-by-mail program to continue our focus on opioid addiction crisis. (PG. 17)

Launched GovQ&A to make it easier for the public to request public data.



Collected more than 190 lbs. of medication during October's National Drug Take Back Day.

Required deputies to train on de-escalation, implicit bias, and racial equity.

Transitioned most civilian staff to remote work.



Budget & Staffing

AGENCY BUDGET \$121.1 million

AGENCY STAFFING	
Licensed staff	323
Detention staff	221
Civilian staff	258



MAJOR JEFF STORMS

Public Safety Services Bureau



Division: Enforcement Services

The Public Safety Services Bureau's Public Safety Services Division (PSSD) provides emergency response, patrol service, DWI enforcement, warrant service, civil paper service, and response to in-progress crimes. This division includes several specialized units and functions: Patrol, Water Patrol, Warrants, Transport, K9, Special Operations, School Resource Officer, Hospital Security Enforcement Unit, and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit. Visit our website for more information on each unit.

In 2020, the Public Safety Services Bureau completed the rollout of body-worn cameras to all licensed staff in the PSSD, Forensic Science Laboratory, and Emergency Services Unit. The Water Patrol Unit conducted more than 1,500 hours of search and recovery operations in 2020 — more than four times the normal average.



2020 Statistics

PATROL

<i>Contracted patrol hours</i>	
Greenfield	2,893.13
Hanover	1,101.67
Medicine Lake	855.34
Arrests	517
Citations	703
DWI arrests	62

WATER PATROL

Citations issued	525
Boaters under the influence	36
Search and recovery hours	1,530

WARRANTS

Extraditions	389
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CIVIL

Processes served	7,339
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TRANSPORT

Miles driven	220,971
Inmates/patients transported	4,559

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Special deputy hours	9,924.95
Explorers hours	159

MAJOR JEFF STORMS

Public Safety Services Bureau



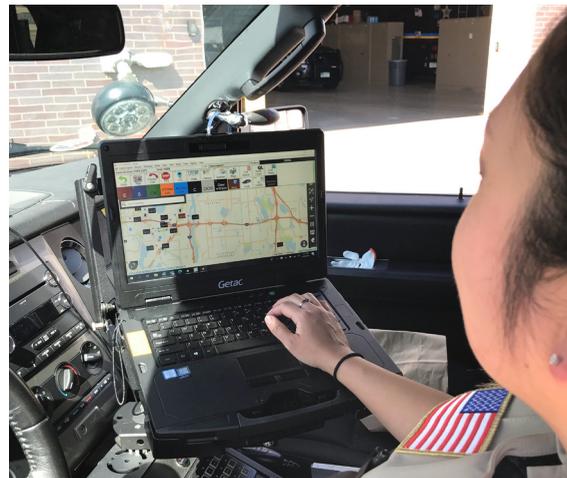
Division: 911 Dispatch

The 911 dispatchers at our Emergency Communications Facility (ECF) identify the needs of the caller and then determine an appropriate level of response by law enforcement, fire, or emergency medical responders. In 2020, the ECF entered Phase II of its 911 Mental Health Social Worker Project, testing tools designed to provide targeted support for people in crisis and training to dispatchers in managing mental health-related calls. The ECF is also home to the communications technology team. Interoperable radios are essential for communication among first responders during routine calls for service and critical incidents. The HCSO repairs and maintains radios on behalf of dozens of agencies. In total, our technicians maintain 10 percent of all radios in Minnesota.



Division: IT Technology

Much like any industry or line of work, the HCSO relies heavily on technology to deliver services to the people of Hennepin County. The Information Technology Division is focused on deploying new technology, updating existing technology, and finding new ways to improve the efficiency of the public safety services we deliver to the citizens of Hennepin County. In 2020, this team was responsible for ensuring that a large portion of the agency's workforce was equipped to work remotely due to the pandemic. This included distributing new laptops to many employees as part of a planned county-wide technology refresh.



2020 Statistics

Phone transactions	658,584
911 calls	266,685
Computer-aided dispatch events	612,123

WE PROVIDE DISPATCH SERVICES FOR

- 38 Communities
- 26 Law enforcement agencies
- 26 Fire departments
- 4 EMS providers

RADIOS AND COMPUTERS SUPPORTED

Police departments supported	28
Radios maintained	8,349
Mobile data computers	547
Communication sites	18

MAJOR PAT KING

Investigations Bureau



Division: Gun Permit

One of the busiest units within the Sheriff's Office in 2020 was the Gun Permit Unit (GPU), which had to make major adjustments to the way it operates to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. GPU's offices in Minneapolis City Hall and Brooklyn Park were both remodeled to comply with COVID-19 restrictions and successfully transitioned to a paperless application process. The Unit implemented an all-new online appointment system, began accepting credit card transactions, and released informational videos on the new application process in English, Spanish, Hmong, and Somali. Despite all these changes, the Gun Permit Unit handled a record number of permit applications in 2020 — an increase of about 72% from 2019. The Gun Permit Unit also is statutorily mandated to review each permit holder's background each year, and Hennepin County has more active permit holders than any other county in the state. All of this was accomplished with no additional staff!



Division: Forensic Science Laboratory

We provide forensic services to more than 35 suburban law enforcement agencies, the Minnesota State Patrol, and several federal law enforcement agencies. The FSL is one of only seven accredited crime laboratories in Minnesota, and one of only four in the state accredited to perform DNA analysis. The FSL has also earned international accreditation. In 2020, the Crime Scene Section processed 23 major crime scenes, including 16 homicides and three suspicious deaths.



Division: Investigative

The Investigative Division includes the Detectives Unit, Gun Permit Unit, and task forces such as the West Metro Drug Task Force (WMDTF), Violent Offender Task Force, and Southwest Hennepin Drug Task Force. These task forces work in partnership with other law enforcement agencies and handled some of HCSO's largest cases of 2020, including a WMDTF investigation that set a record for the amount of methamphetamine seized in the state of Minnesota. Combined, the task forces made 775 arrests, confiscated more than 350 firearms, and made multiple seizures of large quantities of illegal narcotics.

In 2020, the Detective Unit investigated more than 900 cases, not including gun permit cases. Detectives work in communities where our agency is the primary law enforcement service provider and in communities where the local police department does not have full-time investigators. Detectives investigate many critical incidents, including homicides.

2020 Statistics

GUN PERMITS

Applications	10,337
Renewals	1,686

FORENSIC SCIENCE LAB

Requests for laboratory services	5,897
Latent print requests	745
DNA requests	1,660
Crime scene responses	1,915
Digital images captured	136,000

DETECTIVES

Felony charges	164
Gross misdemeanor charges	89
Cases opened	925

VIOLENT OFFENDER TASK FORCE

Illegal firearms confiscated	202
Arrests	428
State charges	149
Federal charges	5
Search warrants	297

MAJOR DAN KURTZ

Administrative Services Bureau



2020 Statistics

Division: Professional Standards Division

The Professional Standards Division (PSD) staffs, trains, and — through its TriWellness Unit — enriches the Mind, Body, and Spirit of HCSO employees. PSD is also responsible for implementing the policies Sheriff Hutchinson promulgates to ensure that HCSO stays at the forefront of 21st Century Policing.

In 2019, PSD's Personnel Unit implemented new hiring and training processes designed to hire staff that better reflected the communities we serve. In 2020, this resulted in 74 full-time employees, of which 26 were female (35.1%) and 19 were racially diverse (25.6%).

After the death of George Floyd, the public asked law enforcement agencies to make policy changes, including those that govern the use of force. Fortunately, most of the policies the public wanted agencies to implement were already in place. For example, HCSO also has long had a "duty to intercede" policy that requires any deputy observing another using unreasonable force to intervene and report the incident to his or her supervisor.

Additionally, PSD's Employee Development Unit successfully implemented the first phase of HCSO's body-worn camera (BWC) project. In 2020, over 110 deputies were trained on the use of BWCs, fostering more transparency with the public. The program will expand in 2021 to include personnel from the jail and courts.

Finally, PSD was also in charge of coordinating the COVID-19 response for the entire agency, developing policies to protect the health and safety of both staff and the public.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DIVISION

<i>Employee Development Unit</i>	
Total hours of training provided	36,500
<i>Personnel Unit</i>	
Staff hired	70
Promotions	48

Division: Community Outreach Division

The Community Outreach Division (COD) plays a critical role in the Sheriff's Office refocused approach to achieving and sustaining gains against crime by strengthening community relationships and trust. The division partners with community leaders, civic organizations, block associations, and concerned citizens to educate them on HCSO policies and procedures, and to develop solutions to challenges that arise within the County's many diverse communities. COD also provides young people with enrichment, diversion, and intervention programs, which help to reduce youth crime.

COD develops strong partnerships with communities likely to experience challenges and works to resolve these issues along with community leaders. COD offers various programs and services as part of the unit's ongoing efforts to enhance quality of life and to reduce fear and to create and strengthen trust within Hennepin County. Just a few examples are the HCSO Youth Bike Program, HCSO Citizens Academy, and Immigrant Outreach and Education.

COD stays closely linked with various groups through meetings and events and seeks to build mutual understanding among diverse communities. To request the Community Outreach team at your event, contact Captain Felicia Chesmer at 612-543-0433 or felicia.chesmer@hennepin.us.



MAJOR DAWANNA WITT

Detention/Court Services Bureau



Division: Adult Detention

The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office operates the largest jail in Minnesota. It is accredited by the American Correctional Association, which signifies that we maintain the highest standards of inmate custody and care. No aspect of our agency was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as deeply as the Adult Detention Division. Every aspect of the jail had to be rethought to protect the health of both inmates and staff. At the start of the pandemic, a jail population oversight committee, comprised of courts, city and county attorneys, law enforcement agencies, and the Hennepin County Board and Administration, worked together to reduce the number of people coming into the jail. A new screening process was developed to screen and quarantine everyone coming into the jail. Inmates who are symptomatic, exposed, or confirmed positive are housed in designated housing until cleared by medical staff. In-person visitation was suspended, replaced by three free phone calls per week. A new telemedicine room was also constructed, reducing the need to transport inmates to the Hennepin County Medical Center.

Through these and other steps, the jail staff was able to maintain low numbers of confirmed COVID-19 through the end of 2020. Throughout the pandemic, the jail was able to continue to offer critical opioid addiction treatment in our facility. Socially distanced programming to help inmates avoid reoffending resumed in late 2020 after being temporarily suspended earlier in the pandemic.

The Adult Detention Division also includes Central Records, which tracks information on anyone booked into or discharged from our jail. Each year, they generally process around 30,000 inmates, but 2020 was significantly lower, with only 21,173 bookings.

Division: Court Services

The Court Services Division provides law enforcement services to the Fourth Judicial District Court to ensure that the judicial system operates in a safe and orderly manner. We provide security for judges, juries, witnesses, personnel, and all visitors in approximately 96 courtrooms across multiple facilities. We address security concerns with judges and court personnel, conduct patrols and security checks in the courthouses, and assist with screening for weapons. In 2020, Court Services worked with other public safety partners to implement a wide range of changes to allow court operations to continue during the pandemic, including transitioning most court hearings to remote appearances. Court Services also worked hard to maintain smooth operations during the in-person pre-trial appearances for the former Minneapolis Police Department officers charged in the death of George Floyd.

LOCATIONS

- Downtown Minneapolis
 - Government Center
 - Public Safety Facility
 - Juvenile Justice Center
 - Family Justice Center
- Outer Divisions
 - Division 2: Brookdale
 - Division 3: Ridgedale

2020 Statistics

ADULT DETENTION DIVISION

2020 bookings	21,173
Average bookings per day	58
Inmate meals served	798,635
Average morning inmate count	532
Average length of stay	9.35 days

COURT SERVICES DIVISION

Defendants escorted to court	21,016
Patients escorted to court	770

BRYAN BENNETT, DIRECTOR

Finance

Division: Finance

Our Finance Division provided fiscal analysis for the agency, developed the five-year capital improvement plan and set the operating budget of \$121.1 million for 2020. The Sheriff's Office has operated within budget 14 consecutive years, with roughly the same number of employees. We act as good stewards of taxpayer dollars by implementing cost-saving measures, aggressively seeking federal and state grants, developing efficiencies in operations, and enhancing partnerships in law enforcement and the community. In 2020, the Finance Division was responsible for obtaining equipment to ensure that much of the agency's staff could work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Programs

S.T.O.P.

Opioid-related deaths have reached epidemic levels and the numbers continue to increase. Opioid overdoses are now the leading cause of death in the U.S. for people under the age of 50. According to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 650,000 opioid prescriptions are dispensed on an average day in the U.S. HHS estimates that 3,900 people initiate the nonmedical use of prescription opioids every day. The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) can play a clear role in reducing opioid-related deaths. Sheriff Hutchinson has developed the Survival Through Overdose Prevention (S.T.O.P.) strategy to fight the deadly epidemic. This program includes strategies to keep these drugs out of the wrong hands, treating those with opioid use disorder in the jails, and using tools to prevent fatal overdoses. Strategies for combatting opioid abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic included online naloxone training and mailing Deterra drug disposal bags to anyone who wanted to safely dispose of unwanted medications. For more information, visit hennepinsheriff.org/stop.

W.I.S.E.

In the Land of 10,000 Lakes, watersports are a way of life. In Hennepin County alone, there are 104 lakes and three rivers. The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) is responsible for the safety and regulation of all lakes and, in conjunction with the US Coast Guard and adjoining county sheriffs, the rivers of the county. One of the best ways that the HCSO can achieve safety on our lakes and rivers is through education. Through the Water and Ice Safety Education (WISE) program, HCSO works to educate the public on how to be safe during all types of water recreation. For more information, visit hennepinsheriff.org/wise.



ROB ALLEN, CHIEF OF STAFF

Sheriff's Administration

The Office of the Sheriff serves as the civilian front office staff for Sheriff Hutchinson. Intergovernmental Relations, Communications, Public Initiatives, Grant Writing, and Public Affairs are all the Sheriff's public safety goals. Civic speaking engagements, legislative advocacy, media engagement, and partnerships with elected officials are all coordinated by the Office of the Sheriff staff.

SHERIFF DAVID HUTCHINSON

Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a diverse group of residents who provide community feedback and participation in the development of our practices and policies. The work of CAB members includes:

- Identify and discuss community public safety issues
- Act as policy advisors
- Provide feedback on Sheriff's Office initiatives
- Contribute to Sheriff's Office strategic planning
- Work as ambassadors in their communities to help educate others about the Sheriff's Office

2020 Promotions & Retirements

Promotions

CAPTAIN

Spencer Bakke
Felicia Chesmer

LIEUTENANT

Michael Benson
Nabil Gottwaldt

SERGEANT

Sarah Blonk Buck
Jason Hughes
Cory Mclouden
Christopher Nybeck

DEPUTY

Nasir Ali
Jesse Clarke
Christopher Coats
Luis Paniagua

TELECOMMUNICATOR SERGEANT

Joellen Kimmel

TELECOMMUNICATOR

Joellen Kimmel

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR

Joseph Steffens

FORENSIC SCIENCE SUPERVISOR

Teddy Annang

DETENTION SERGEANT

Jason Hatfield
Trent Jovanovich
Dale Vassar

DETENTION DEPUTY

Vivian Easter
Isom English
Amber Garvey
Shanita Ollie

RECORDS CLERK

Cynthia Baring
Gennifer Reynolds
Jean Rosario

SENIOR COOK

Roman Pliego

Retirements

Teresa Becker
David Bentzen
David Bruce
Robin Bullis-Tiegs
Kelly Doriott
Scott Frazer
Jody Goers

Jeffrey Haas
Steve Hartig
Robert Hatchell
John Hill
Eric Kromvig
Matthew Lunde
David Nies

John Piper
Joseph Poidinger
Vicki Schmidt
Michael A. Smith
Dan Vue
Michael Wresh



Leadership



Sheriff David P. Hutchinson

David P. Hutchinson took office as the 28th Sheriff of Hennepin County on January 7, 2019. As Sheriff, he has focused on issues of staff and community wellness, community safety, and providing a workforce that mirrors the residents of Hennepin County. He is nationally recognized for his work on providing officer wellness and medically assisted treatment for incarcerated individuals experiencing opioid addiction. In the first year of his administration, Sheriff Hutchinson created an internal wellness unit called Tri Wellness in order to help his staff deal with the stresses of the law enforcement field. He firmly believes that keeping employees mentally, physically, and spiritually healthy will lead to better service for the public.

In response to the changing responsibilities of law enforcement, he created two new divisions within the agency: The Community Outreach Division and the Criminal Intelligence Division. The Community Outreach Division is focused on improving bonds between law enforcement and the communities they serve and includes programs such as the Community Engagement team and Sheriff's Youth Program. The Criminal Intelligence Division is focused on data-driven policing, using information to identify crime patterns, forecast criminal trends, generate investigative leads, assist with the identification of suspects involved in criminal activity, and much more. Sheriff Hutchinson is dedicated to strengthening relationships with partner agencies and local law enforcement offices. He currently serves as Technology Chair for the Major County Sheriffs of America, and as Secretary for the Major County Sheriffs of America Foundation Board. He is a past member of the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and currently serves on the board of YouthLink.

Command Staff



Chief Deputy
Tracey Martin



Major Jeff Storms
Public Safety
Services Bureau



Major Pat King
Investigations Bureau



Major
Dawanna Witt
Detention/Court
Services Bureau



Major Dan Kurtz
Administrative
Services Bureau



Rob Allen
Chief of Staff



Tim Stout
Director of Planning



Volunteers

Volunteers are a crucial part of our agency's ability to provide public safety services to the residents of Hennepin County. While much of our volunteer program was suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19, we will be resuming many of these programs in 2021. In our agency, volunteers serve in a variety of roles, including working at our State Fair booth, assisting in our jail, or even getting trained as a Special Deputy. In 2020, the Volunteer Services Division partnered with Hennepin County Emergency Management to provide severe weather spotting. These skills were utilized several times over the course of the year. If you would like more information on how you can make a difference in your community as a volunteer, please call 612-348-9650.

Special Deputies

Special Deputies are volunteers who receive special training in various public safety duties, including:

- Search and rescue
- Horseback mounted patrol
- Patrol of the county's lakes and rivers
- Community events and parades
- Open houses, citizen academies, and public demonstrations
- Emergency call outs
- Natural disasters
- Water safety inspections
- Support patrol operations
- Traffic and crowd control
- Crime scene support
- Amateur radio operators
- Motorist/citizen assists
- Medical emergencies
- Underwater Rescue Team

Explorers

The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Explorer Post #3744 is a youth organization sponsored by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office and the Boy Scouts of America and supported by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Foundation. The Explorer Post provides young people (ages 14–20) an opportunity to learn about the law enforcement profession through volunteer service. Members of the Sheriff's Office serve as advisors and liaisons between the Sheriff's Office and the Explorers. The Explorers continually train for competitions covering topics such as crime scene searches and accident investigations with other Explorer Posts from law enforcement agencies across the region.

Partner with us!

Volunteer

We expect many volunteer opportunities to resume in 2021. In most years, more than 100 citizens from a variety of community groups volunteer at the Hennepin County Jail to give instruction to inmates. Classes include Alcoholics Anonymous, art, creative writing, resume and interviewing skills, domestic violence prevention, and religious instruction.

Join!

National Night Out: Every August, there are hundreds of neighborhood events for National Night Out and Night to Unite. When neighbors pledge to watch out for one another, it helps promote crime prevention. National Night Out allows our deputies, volunteers, and K9 teams to meet residents, build trust, and answer their questions about public safety.



Connect with us

**HENNEPIN COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

350 South 5th Street
Room 6
Minneapolis, MN 55415

sheriff@hennepin.us
hennepinsheriff.org
612-348-3744



@hennepinsheriff



hennepin-county-sheriff