

# Hennepin County Sheriff's Office

## 2020 Accomplishments

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The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficult circumstances which arose from the civil unrest in our communities presented unprecedented challenges in 2020. Due to the incredible work of all the employees of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, we were able to rise to meet these challenges. Because of the hard work and true commitment by the agency, so much was still achieved. Here are just a few examples of what we accomplished during this most unusual year:

- Formed two new Divisions — the Criminal Intelligence Division (CID) and Community Outreach Division (COD) — to better serve the needs of the community.
  - The Criminal Intelligence Division provides crime analysis and investigative case support. CID staff was crucial in monitoring the violent aspects of the civil unrest and the sharp increase in crime. CID personnel also supported multiple criminal investigations that led to numerous arrests for violent crimes such as arson, felony assaults and gun violence. In partnership with local, state and federal agencies HCSO CID hosted the Twin Cities Violent Crime Task Force to effectively identify crime patterns and suspects involved in violent crime.
  - The Community Outreach Division (COD) was created and staffed with licensed peace officers to increase positive interactions between law enforcement and the communities we serve. Their efforts included outreach to youth, distributing PPE, water safety awareness, and partnering with other organizations to focus on livability issues to the most vulnerable residents in our county.
- Provided law enforcement and court security services for several pre-trial hearings involving a high-profile criminal case that drew world-wide attention. Due to the notoriety and the potential for civil unrest, each hearing required a heightened level of planning, staffing and security.
- Installed a full-body scanner to safely search people who are booked into the Hennepin County Public Safety Facility to safely find dangerous concealed items, such as drugs, weapons and other contraband.
- Implemented and successfully completed phase-one of the body-worn camera (BWC) project. Over 110 staff members 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.



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- Trained our employees to meet the highest standards and emphasized de-escalation, implicit bias, diversity, racial equity training and the duty to intercede.
- In response to the pandemic, implemented best practices and mitigation strategies for our employees, inmates and the general public to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, including significant operational innovations throughout the agency.
  - Worked with the District Court and other public safety partners to implement a wide range of procedural changes that allowed for continued court operations during COVID-19, including the transition of almost all court hearings to remote appearances.
  - Constructed a telemedicine room in the PSF medical center, allowing inmates to safely consult with a health care professional via an iPad or monitor in the jail.
  - The Gun Permit Unit successfully moved towards a paperless application process and instituted an online appointment system all while handling a record number of gun permit applications.
  - The IT division strategically redistributed laptops throughout the agency to facilitate employees working remotely.
- The Wellness Unit increased its chaplain program to coordinate services across every division with a focus on making sure our staff is cared for in mind, body and spirit.
- Emergency Services Unit added a deputy who is also an emergency room doctor at HCMC. This individual will provide medical direction to the unit and be able to provide on-scene medical assistance should the need arise.
- Organized a successful fundraising effort through the Pink Patch program to donate funds to the American Cancer Society to battle breast cancer. This successful effort in partnership with the Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation raised almost \$10K for breast cancer awareness.
- Continued to work with multiple federal, state and local partners to combat the opioid epidemic, including collecting more than 190 pounds of medication during October's National Drug Take Back Day.
- Seized over 200 illegal firearms as a result of collaboration between the Violent Offender Task Force and their joint task force partners.

As you can see, despite the incredible challenges of 2020, the men and women of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office performed at the highest levels of professionalism and dedication. HCSO will continue to strive for excellence by talking and listening to community members, continually and thoroughly reviewing office policies and procedures and fostering partnerships to make Hennepin County a safer place to live, work and visit.