



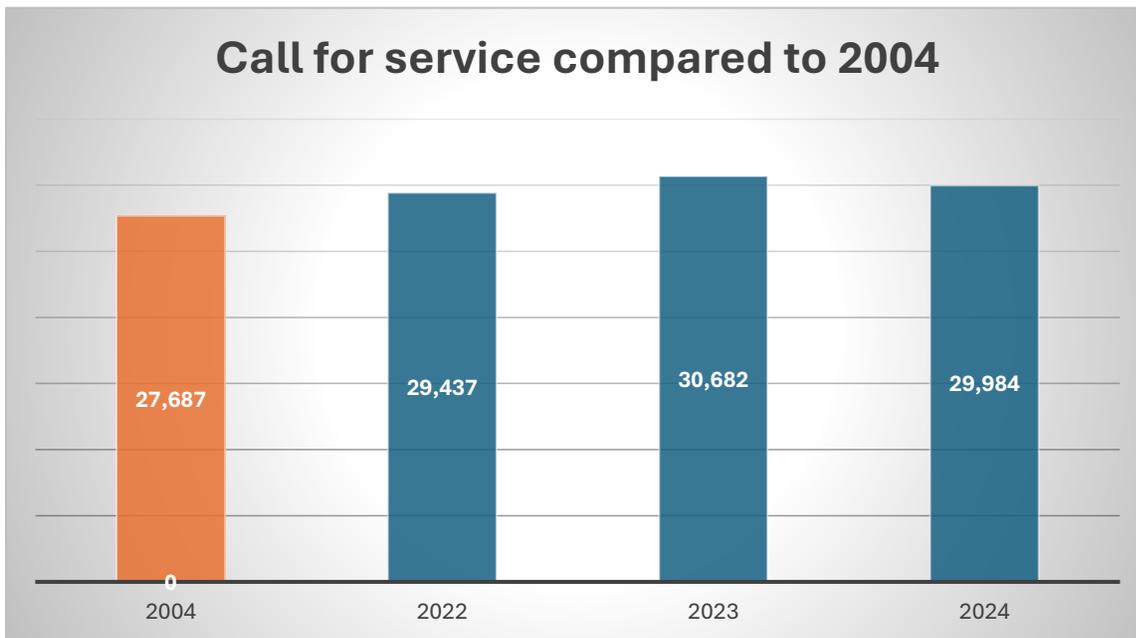
New Berlin Police Department

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History

In 2004, the police department was budgeted with 74 sworn officers. During the economic downturn of the early 2000s, the police department reduced its budgeted number of officers to as low as 67 sworn officers. By 2024, the number of sworn officers slowly increased to 70, throughout this 20-year span, 2004 to 2024, the police department has not experienced a reduction in call for service, but other factors have continued to impact our daily operations.

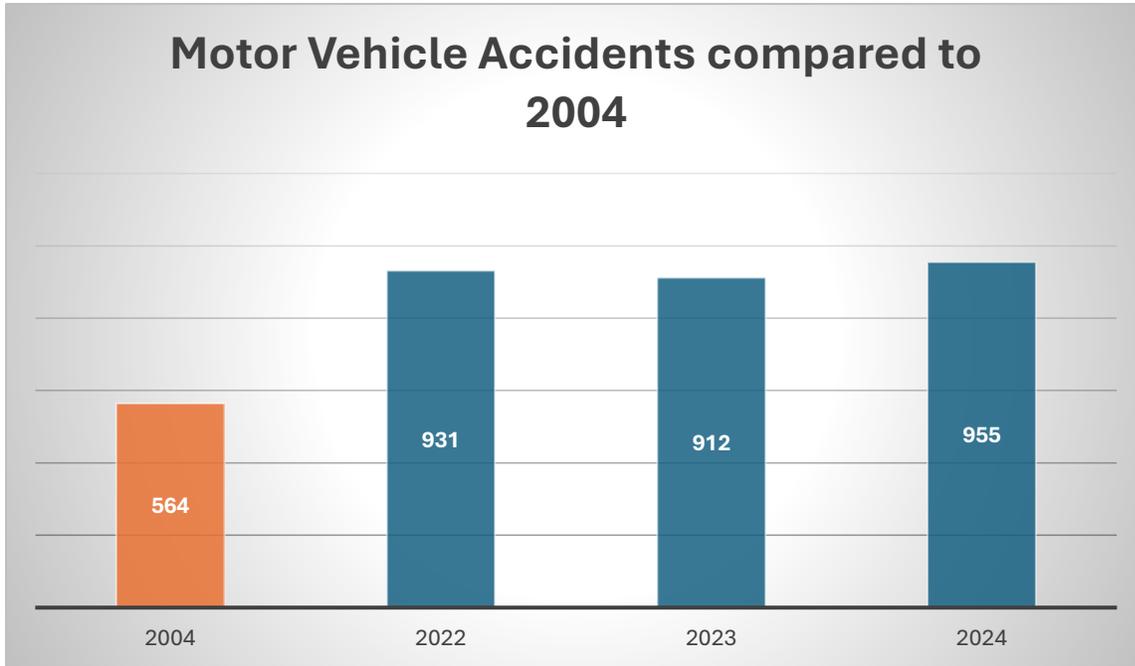


While the volume of calls has remained steady—or increased—the nature of calls has shifted, becoming significantly more time-intensive and complex. Incidents that now require more time and resources include:

- Motor vehicle accidents
- Critical incidents
- Mental health-related calls
- Domestic violence cases
- Fraud and financial crime investigations

These types of calls often involve lengthy on-scene response, coordination with other agencies, detailed reporting, and in some cases, ongoing follow-up investigations. The decreased staffing, combined with the increasing complexity of calls, has placed a greater strain on officer

availability, reducing their ability to remain proactive and responsive across all areas of public safety.



Proactive Policing

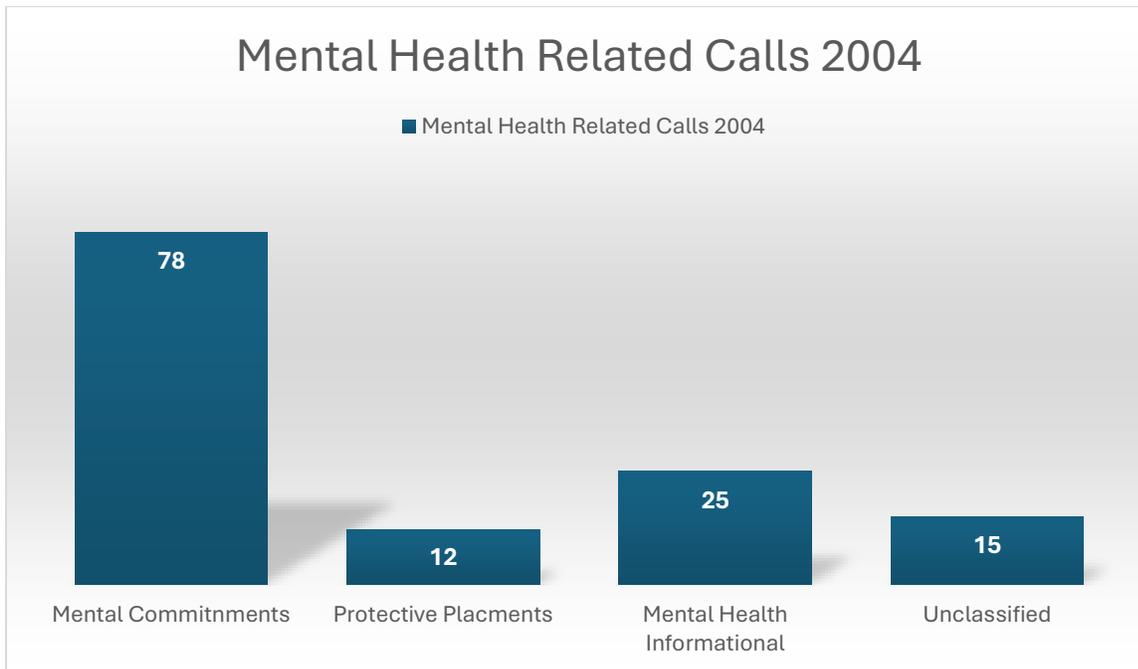
An officer's ability to engage in proactive policing is significantly limited by the volume and complexity of time-intensive calls for service. These calls often require extensive on-scene investigation, follow-up, report writing, and coordination with external agencies. As a result, they reduce the time available for self-initiated activity such as community engagement, targeted enforcement, and preventative patrols.

Common examples of time-intensive calls include:

- Traffic-related complaints
- Theft investigations
- Fraud, identity theft, and financial crimes
- OWI (Operating While Intoxicated) arrests
- Domestic violence incidents
- Mental health-related calls, including:
 - Mental health commitments
 - Wellbeing checks and suicide assessments

These types of calls are not only resource-demanding but also critical to public safety, often requiring multiple officers and significant time to resolve. When staffing levels are at minimum, the cumulative impact of these incidents leaves less time for proactive policing strategies, which are essential for crime prevention, community trust-building, and long-term public safety outcomes.

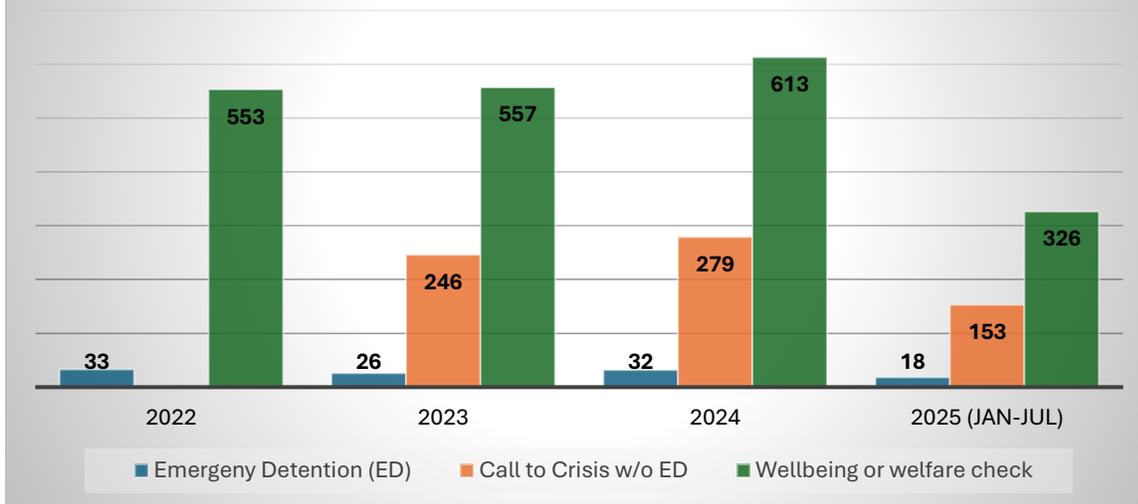
Mental Commitments & Wellbeing Checks



In 2004, the Police Department operated under a different Record Management System. The following were included in categories in 2004 that are now summarized in 2025 RMS as either mental commitments or wellbeing checks:

- Mental Commitments (78)- all suicide or emergency detentions
- Protective Placement (12)- protective custody due to aging or disability and all runaway or uncontrollable juvenile
- Mental Health Information (25)- Any well-being check where a commitment was authorized but subject exhibited signs of mental health issues or concerns
- Unclassified (15)- uncategorized mental health calls to include homeless or undetermined MH status
- Since the mid-2010s, Law Enforcement in Waukesha County has worked extensively with Health and Human services to better assess individual needs and to determine proper treatment and emergency placement. In 2023, WCHHS and NBPD began tracking the number of calls to a crisis worker that resulted in Emergency Detention or a safety plan. A crisis worker responds to complete an on-scene assessment and coordinate either placement or a safety plan with police versus 2004 when the decision was left to the officer(s) on scene.

Emergency Detention and Wellbeing Check 2022-2025



Calls for service related to mental health continue to demand a significant amount of time and resources from officers. These calls often involve multiple stages of response and coordination with external agencies, including:

- Initial contact and investigation
- Coordination with Health and Human Services crisis workers
- Medical clearance at a hospital when required
- Transport and placement at a suitable facility

On average:

- Mental health commitments take approximately 9.5 hours from initial contact to final placement.
- Mental health calls that do not result in immediate transport to a facility or result in a safety plan, still average about 2 hours to resolve.

In addition to mental commitments, officers frequently respond to well-being checks, which are often more frequent and equally taxing on staffing levels. These include:

- Reports of concerning or erratic behavior
- Interactions with homeless individuals
- Assistance requests for aging individuals or those with disabilities

While critical to community safety and well-being, these calls pull officers away from proactive patrol duties and other service demands. The increasing frequency and complexity of these incidents highlight the need for additional resources, improved interagency coordination, and long-term planning around mental health response.

Current Staffing Overview

The department is currently staffed with 70 sworn officers plus one authorized pre-hire intended to fill an anticipated retirement in 2026. However, 9 of these officers are not currently counting towards shift staffing due to the following reasons:

- 4 officers are currently on extended FMLA
 - (2) modified duty along with maternity leave could be as long as 9 months
 - (2) serious injury or illness resulting in extended amount of time on light duty
- 3 officers are currently in field training
 - Minimum of 16 weeks of field training
- 2 officers are attending the academy
 - Expected return in December 2025 however they will need to field train for an additional 16 weeks

In addition, 3 more officers are expected to take FMLA for an extended amount of time on paternity leave before the end of 2025.

These absences have significantly impacted our ability to meet daily minimum staffing levels, leaving patrol units solely responsible for maintaining minimum patrol coverage along with an impact on our overtime budget. Operating at or below minimum staffing reduces officer availability for proactive policing, community engagement, and preventative efforts.

Over the past three years, the department has operated with a shortfall of 5 to 10 sworn personnel due to the reasons stated above, which has either necessitated the reassignment of duties or left several key specialty positions vacant, including:

- Undercover drug or other vice related crime investigator
- Administrative Sergeant
- Training Officer
- K9 Officer
- Other short-term vacancies that shift based on priorities

The inability to staff these positions hinders the efficiency and effectiveness of departmental operations and limits opportunities for officer development and professional growth.

Changes in Policing Since 2004

Since 2004, the role of a police officer has evolved significantly, with growing demands associated with accreditation, technology use, reporting requirements, and mandatory training. These changes, while improving transparency and officer preparedness, also add substantial time and workload to daily operations.

1. Increased Technology Requirements

Officers are now expected to engage with a variety of digital systems that did not exist or were limited in 2004:

- Body-Worn Cameras (BWC) and Fleet Video Systems
 - Require officers to log in, categorize footage, and ensure proper storage for evidentiary and legal purposes.
- Real-Time GIS Data and Information Sharing
 - Officers now operate with real-time intelligence tools for situational awareness and deployment.
- Digital Documentation
 - What was once jotted down in an officer's notebook must now be entered into formal digital reporting systems, increasing documentation time and precision.

2. Expanded Reporting & Legal Demands

- Public Records Requests & Litigation Readiness
 - Increased demand for transparency and open records compliance requires officers to ensure reports, video, and digital records are accurate, well-organized, and legally sound.
- Detailed Report Writing
 - Even minor incidents now require extensive documentation to meet internal, legal, and public expectations. Including review of body worn cameras prior to written documentation to ensure accuracy

3. Mandatory and Specialized Training

Ongoing training requirements have increased both in frequency and complexity. Officers must now complete numerous mandatory annual certifications as well as specialized tactical and situational training, including:

- Use of Force, Firearms Qualification, and Legal Updates (Annual)
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
- Taser, PepperBall, and Less-Lethal Munitions
- Pursuit Intervention Techniques (PIT)
- Rescue Task Force and Active Shooter Response
- Training on Emerging Threats and Trends, such as:
 - New drug trends (e.g., fentanyl safety)

- Human trafficking investigations
- Technology-assisted crimes, including cell phone and digital evidence recovery

These training requirements often pull officers off shift for full days at a time, further impacting staffing and shift coverage. The department has an increasing need for **certified in-house trainers** to manage these requirements cost-effectively and efficiently.

Outlook and Future Needs

To maintain effective public safety and adapt to the increasing complexity of law enforcement, the department must prioritize strategic investments in staffing, specialized units, and technology. The following key areas outline the most critical needs for sustainable operations and long-term service delivery:

1. Minimum Staffing Enhancements

Current staffing levels only meet minimum patrol requirements, limiting flexibility and proactive policing. Moving forward, overall staffing levels must be increased to ensure:

- **Training Coverage** – Allow officers to attend mandatory and advanced training without depleting patrol strength.
- **Field Training Officers (FTOs)** – Ensure the department continues to develop experienced officers to mentor and field train new officers.
- **Expert Trainers and Specialists** – Support the development of in-house training staff who are specialists to manage increasing certification and readiness demands.

2. Dedicated Traffic Unit

With a noted increase in reckless driving and traffic accidents, the department needs to establish a dedicated traffic enforcement unit to:

- Conduct targeted enforcement operations
- Investigate serious or fatal crashes
- Handle traffic-related community complaints
- Reduce the burden on general patrol officers

3. Specialized Investigators for Financial Crimes & Human Trafficking

The growing complexity and frequency of financial crimes, identity theft, and human trafficking necessitate a dedicated investigator or small unit with specialized training. These crimes often involve:

- Long-term investigations

- Collaboration with state and federal agencies
- Digital evidence collection and analysis

Without dedicated resources, these cases risk delays, limited follow-up, or non-investigation.

4. Technology Modernization

To stay operationally efficient and data-driven, the department must continue to invest in modern technology solutions, including:

- Upgraded Records Management System (RMS) Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), and a system that ties the RMS information from other agencies together
- Drone capabilities for tactical support, search and rescue, crash scene mapping, and surveillance
- Tools to enhance digital evidence processing, especially for crimes involving phones, cloud storage, and social media

5. Recruitment and Retention Strategy

With fewer officers reaching long-term tenure, the department must develop strategies to:

- Attract and retain qualified officers, including lateral hires and academy graduates
- Offer professional development opportunities, including promotions and specialty positions, to boost retention
- Adapt to generational workforce changes, focusing on work-life balance, wellness, and career progression

By addressing these areas, the department can ensure long-term service sustainability, improve officer wellness and readiness, and better serve the community's evolving needs.